

Solid Copy

The CW Operators Club Newsletter
December 2025 — Issue 191



President's Message



Youth Takeover - CQ WW DX. N7JI "observing."

This is the final time I have the honour of opening *Solid Copy* with my President's Message. As my second full term serving as President of CWops draws to a close the time seems right for a



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CWops "CWT" 1 hour 'tests
Every Wednesday at 1300z and 1900z
Every Thursday at 0300z and 0700z
Exchange: name/number (members)
name/SPC (non-members)
Avoid DX Pileups!

CWO Mini-club callsign web site:
<http://cwomc.org>

CWops "neighborhood": Look for CWops on
1.818, 3.528, 7.028, 10.118, 14.028, 18.078,
21.028, 24.908, 28.028, 50.098 "and up"

CWops Officers and Directors

President: Stew Rolfe, [GWØETF](#)
Vice President: John Glover, [W2QL](#)
Secretary: Jim Talens, [N3IT](#)
Treasurer: Craig Thompson, [K9CT](#)
Director: Theo Mastakas, [SV2BBK](#)
Director: Raoul Coetzee, [ZS1C](#)
Director: James Brooks, [9V1YC](#)
Director: Bert Banlier, [F6HKA](#)
Director: Allan Mason, [VK2GR](#)
Director: Riki Kline, [K7NJ](#)
Director: Ken Tanuma, [JN1THL](#)
WebGeek: Dan Romanchik [KB6NU](#)
Newsletter Editor: Dick Strassburger, [N9EEE](#)

Table of Contents

President's Message	1
Editor's Notes: Dits and Dahs	3
N1DG: 2025 Election Results	4
Ops News and Notes	5
Hamming It Up	15
How We Were: K6DGW	16
W8HW: Search Engine Query	17
WC3W: DX Marathon - 2025 Submissions	18
K6RB: CW Academy As I Recall	19
N9EEE: VBand: 599 Every Time	23
'Twas The Night Before Christmas	29
Keyed Up	30
New Members	31
Giving Back	32
CW Academy	34
CWT Update	36
CWops Member Awards	38
QTX: The Art of Conversational CW	43
My Story: New Member Introductions	48



(Continued from previous page)

change, both for myself and for the club. Writing these columns each month has become part of my monthly routine and the deadlines have been good for my self-discipline. I've enjoyed writing them and will miss them in a way. I hope I've entertained, and possibly even informed occasionally. From now on anything I submit will appear in the main body of this excellent newsletter, assuming it passes muster ;-)

So, from next month I hand over to WC3W who assumes the Presidency from 2026 as the sole nominee. I had a lengthy video call with Mark recently and have no doubts he will do a great job and take good care of CWops over the coming term. I would like to express my thanks to Don N1DG who as Chair of the Nominating Committee organises the election process each year. Two directors are also completing their terms this year – Theo SV2BBK and Riki K7NJ. Theo is willing to continue and is unopposed; Riki expressed his interest in serving again as Director for North America but joined other nominees so an election ensued as mandated in our Bylaws. It's no doubt a good sign of the health of our club that we had such a strong slate for this position and Don reports that our Editor, Dick, N9EEE won in a close run vote. Congratulations to Dick and welcome to the Board! I'm sure everyone will join me in thanking Riki for his hard work and dedication to the Board of CWops over the years and will continue contributing from the 'back benches'. I'd also like to welcome Theo back and thank our Vice-President John Glover W2QL and all the Directors who have been with me over the previous 5 years. And where would we be without N3JT and K9CT; Jim constantly greasing the cogs and keeping the wheels turning, and Craig making sure we stay solvent and financially healthy? Thanks to all, including the very many ordinary members who contribute to the running of CWops!

I found serving as President to be very much a light touch assignment of overseeing an already smoothly running and well oiled machine. CWops has such a wealth of talent and knowledge that it has developed into a club that by and large tends 'to run itself'. I've never seen myself as a bureaucrat or leader and when asked if I would take on the role at the end of 2020 my instinct was to decline fearing I would be a square peg in a round hole. Inevitably the honour of being asked overcame my doubts and I realised it would also help my aim of widening the appeal of CWops by being the first European to hold the office. Having previously served as Ambassador for North West Europe as well as a Director, this was an ideal opportunity to strengthen this cause, and I've been pleased with the increasing profile of CWops particularly in the UK and any contribution I may have made along the way.

There are some ongoing issues which I think of as either unfinished business or a work in progress depending on my mood of the moment. We still have no Ambassadors to represent the 2 key areas of North and South Central Europe for example. These areas have a significant CWops membership and a healthy population of competent CW operators that could well be a reservoir of potential new members; they would clearly benefit from having at least one Ambassador fluent in the local language(s) to support existing members and spread our message. I have also failed to persuade more EU countries to take on CWops club calls ('CWO' calls) over the last 5 years. Such calls that we do have are listed in the member roster with numbers beginning at 20000 but are aired infrequently (I do use GW2CWO every week in Giving Back). With a few more 'CWO' calls around Europe, the possibility of running CWops QSO parties becomes realistic; a week or month long event with folk trying to work as many of our club calls would certainly raise our profile as well as being a lot of fun. The Ambassador program is currently being re-examined

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and is a work in progress (thanks to W2QL, VK3QB and others); the club calls are a minor issue but I won't forget about them.

All this coincides with the year drawing to a close and the approaching festive season. There's been plenty going on around the world we could do without but hopefully everyone has something to smile about looking back at 2025, and will have many 'reasons to be cheerful' in 2026. Thanks to Dick N9EEE for another superb edition of *Solid Copy* as well as all the contributors who make it what it is. Nadolig llawen a blwyddyn newydd dda!

Have a great Xmas and best wishes for 2026. didid**dah**didah

73, Stew GWØETF, President (CWops #919)

sc

Editor's Note: Dits and Dahs

Some changes are coming to *Solid Copy*—ideally ones you won't even notice. Microsoft will no longer support Publisher, the software we've relied on for years, with its official sunset scheduled for October 2026. That's unfortunate, as Publisher has been an excellent tool for creating *Solid Copy*, and we may have even been among its most dedicated newsletter users. This won't affect our archive as all past issues of *Solid Copy* appear in the PDF format and are stored online for easy access by our readers.

The good news is that I've identified replacement software that looks promising for our layout needs. Of course, we won't fully understand its flexibility or limitations until we put it to the test. My plan is to begin working with it for the January issue, and from there we'll see how well it serves us going forward.

I use AI frequently for researching, writing, and creating graphics—both for *Solid Copy* and in more general ways. As I was looking at the wide range of AI tools available, something struck me: how were these names chosen? Or better yet, *by whom* were they created? Honestly, some of them sound like they might have come straight from ham radio operators. Take a look and see if you agree.

Consider...

ChatGPT = ragchewers

Copilot = testers

OpenAI = POTA

Gemini = SO2R

MidJourney = DXers

Simplicity = QRPers

Perplexity = FT8ers (sorry 🙄)

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And finally, thank you for electing me as your new Director for North America. Congratulations as well to Mark, WC3W, on his election as President of CWops. And Theo, SV2BBK on his re-election as Director for Europe. I accept this as a privilege and am excited to join with them, the Officers and the rest of the Board of Directors to work on behalf of the club's and your interests in 2026.

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays!

73, Dick N9EEE, (CWops #3113)

Editor, Solid Copy (SolidCopy@cwops.org)

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Election Results

Dear Fellow CWops members:

For the first time in several years we had a contested election and 170 of you took part by voting.

It was extremely close as we had 5 very qualified candidates for NA director.

The following are elected and assume their roles on January 1st 2026.

President: Mark, WC3W (Unopposed)

Director, Europe: Theo, SV2BBK (Unopposed)

Director, North America: Dick, N9EEE

Thanks for participating in the governance of our club.

73, Don N1DG (CWops #2)

Chair of the Nominating Committee

Ops News and Notes

[Duncan \(Mac\) Fisken, G3WZD](#)

Welcome to another [Ops News and Notes](#), and thank you for the contributions. We look forward to receiving your personal news, achievements, and activities to share with others in this column. Feel free to send them to me at NewsAndNotes@cwops.org

We regret to report the following Members have become Silent Keys.

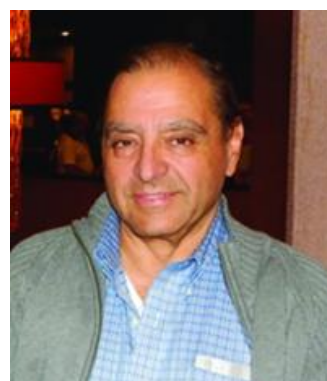
Condolence cards have been sent on behalf of CWops.



Gary Stone
N5PHT #1489
26 November 2025



Lee Buller
KØWA #1859
1 December 2025



Cary Rubenfeld,
VE4EA #1828
4 December 2025

Jim, N7US #486 Photo of CME taken on 11th November by my wife, Liné McDonald.

Scott, N7JI #2348 If we care about the future of contesting... If we care about the future of ham radio... It is up to each of us to build the future.

Sometimes that means letting others play and learn while you merely provide guidance.

Remember that this was a phone contest, but the lesson still stands.



N7JI watching the next generation compete in ARRL Sweepstakes Phone.



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Kat, JM8SMO #3454 The antenna systems on the roof were severely damaged by the storm on 17th November. To avoid any danger, I disassembled some of the antennas. I was hoping to fix my delta loops to work again before CQ WW CW.

These are the photos I took from the beginning of the repair. Due to heavy snow, the parts were buried in snow while I waited for the weekend.



First, I made the ladder to stand on the roof with a basement and ropes.



The antenna rotator was installed at the top. The mast and the boom were then connected.



A damaged pipe of a loop was replaced to a new one.

Finally, I bolted down the loops to the boom and connected the feeding line.

I was able to complete the repair in time for CQWWDX!

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Stew, GWØETF/GW4J #919 I travelled over to the English Peak District near Sheffield to join a small Multi-2 team operating G6XX (the RSGB Contest Club callsign) for CQWWDX, hosted by the RSGB's Contest Committee Chair Nick Totterdell (G4FAL). Also, there was Pawel (MØDSL) and, from around lunchtime Saturday (~1200z) until late afternoon Sunday (~1800z) we were joined by Angel (MØHDF/EA2ECG) #2862. It was nice to meet Angel again and he gave us plenty of welcome downtime.

Thanks to Nick and XYL Ruth for making us so very welcome. With one English, an adopted Welsh, a Spanish and a Polish we were quite a European crew. It was nice to get to operate in a fine shack with good antennas at our disposal. We were pretty busy and never managed to get a photo with Angel, but Pawel works at Sky Broadcasting in technical production and takes a good selfie!



GWØETF and MØDSL

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The other pic is the outside of the very comfortable shack with the Optibeam 11-3, fed via triplexer, above the trees.



Summary - G6XX						
BAND	QSO	DUP	DXCC	ZONE	POINTS	AVG
160	464	0	70	16	599	1.3
80	1115	17	107	26	1834	1.6
40	1306	15	125	36	2138	1.6
20	1248	6	128	34	2354	1.9
15	1312	13	130	34	2749	2.1
10	887	4	124	34	2006	2.3
TOTAL	6332	55	684	180	11680	1.8
FINAL SCORE: 10 091 520						

The Result

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Tim, MØBEW/M4T #2985 My station for CQWWDX CW SOAB HP (A)

Conditions over the weekend were mediocre at best in the UK, with the HF bands closing early and LF being heavily attenuated.

I struggled with a 160m antenna problem which was unsolvable and so continued without it. Af-



ter losing time finding the fault was within the feeder run. Rather than losing more time putting up a replacement antenna I continued with what I had. With hindsight a poor decision.

BAND	QSO	DUP	DXCC	ZONE	POINTS	AVG
160	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
80	1001	27	88	18	1424	1.4
40	1202	25	109	31	1681	1.4
20	1022	9	119	36	1833	1.8
15	1095	11	122	35	2178	2.0
10	535	6	105	31	977	1.8
TOTAL	4855	78	543	151	8093	1.7
FINAL SCORE: 5 616 542						

Station: DXLog, 2 x TS590SG, 2 x KW, 1 x UB50 3el 20-10. Various Dipoles, Verticals, RX Antennas.

As always, the #1 contest of the year didn't fail to provide many fantastic memorable DX QSOs. Thanks to all the ops that called, it really is very much appreciated.

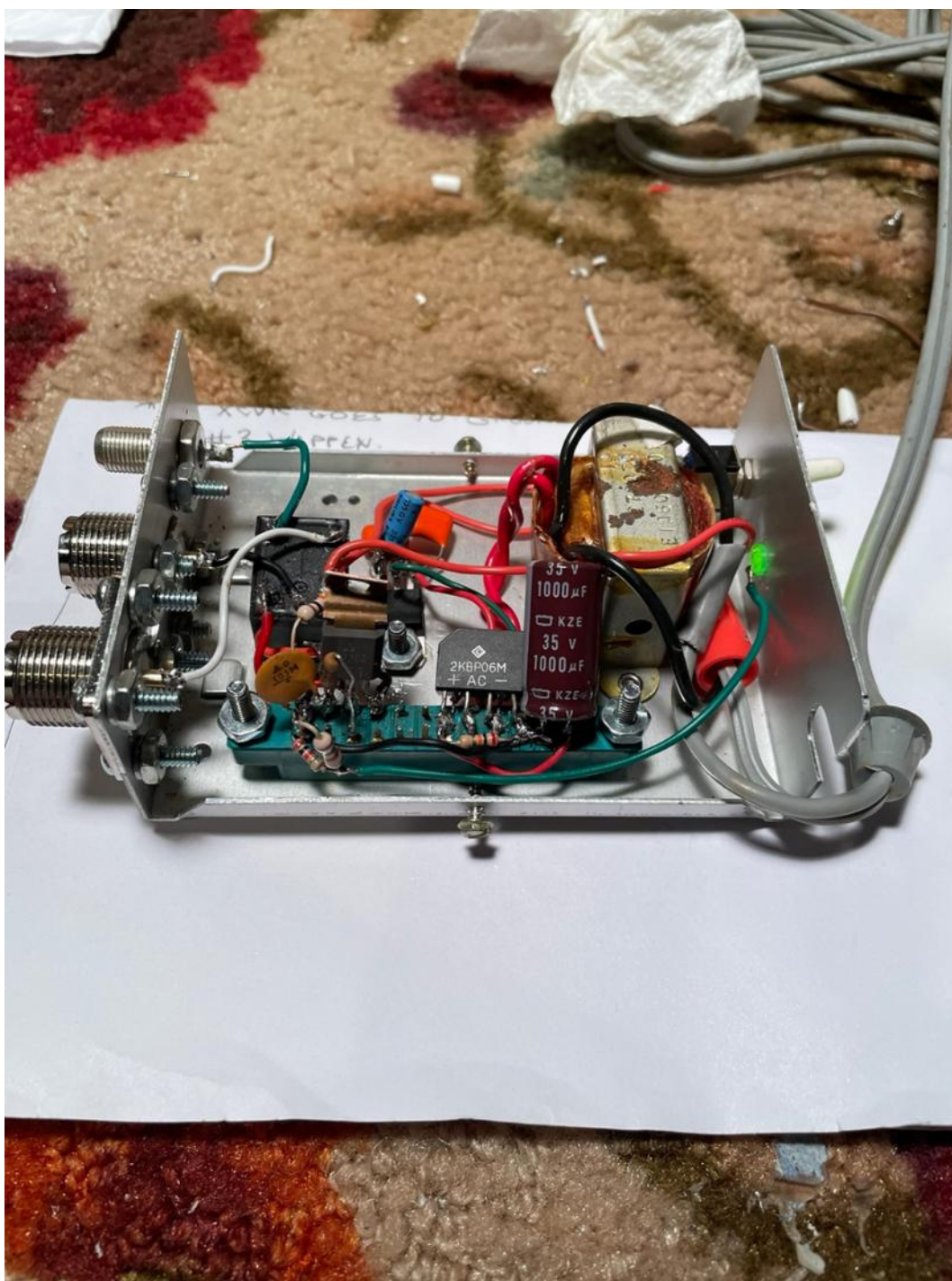
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Cainan, N9FZ #3412 Not CW related but I'm too proud not to share; my 14-year-old daughter, Ava got her callsign: KR4HKX. First thing she ever did on the radio was a 10m POTA activation at US-2195 Reed Bingham State Park in Georgia. We had a lot of fun even if it took a little while.

Lee, NS8O #1496 My IC-7410 does not have a receive antenna connection, so I designed this circuit to provide one. I use it with my Beverage On-Ground on 80/160m - even on 40m - but it doesn't work as well.



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Basically, it consists of one SPDT small, fast, quiet relay. When you turn the power switch on to the unit, the relay is always powered on to pass the Bev antenna signal to the transceiver (through normally open contacts). This is while my XCVR is in receive mode.



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When you don't want to use it: flipping the power switch OFF to the unit turns off the relay and the signal just goes through the normally closed contacts. The Bev is disconnected because the relay is off and your system operates as normal with your dipole (if that's what you have as an antenna, let's say). I'm sorry that I do not have the software to produce circuit diagrams.

Steve, W8TOW #3838 This was taken in October at the [Bletchley Park National Radio Centre](#). I was excited to operate the GB3RS station and fortunate to have a QSO with a German station on 10m CW!



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Scott, W1HLP #3802 Well 2nd December was quite memorable! Temp was right at 32 F and pouring rain. Being a CW operator, my fingers only lasted about 30 mins. Trying to send 28 wpm in those temps can be difficult. I managed 26 QSOs in under 30 minutes. Propagation was good, but that's about it!

Here are a couple pics from today's activation at US-1705 Osbornedale State Park.



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Manos Chalaris, SV1DAY #3334 reports from CW Academy in Greece. CWA members participat-



The Greek CW Academy team participated in the CQ WW CW 2025 contest at SZ1A. From left to right: SV1SYM, SV8SXV, SV1DAY, SV8SXF, SV1PMQ



The entire SZ1A team.

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Duncan, G3WZD/M3F #1979 Rainbow over the M3F antennas during CQWWDX CW.

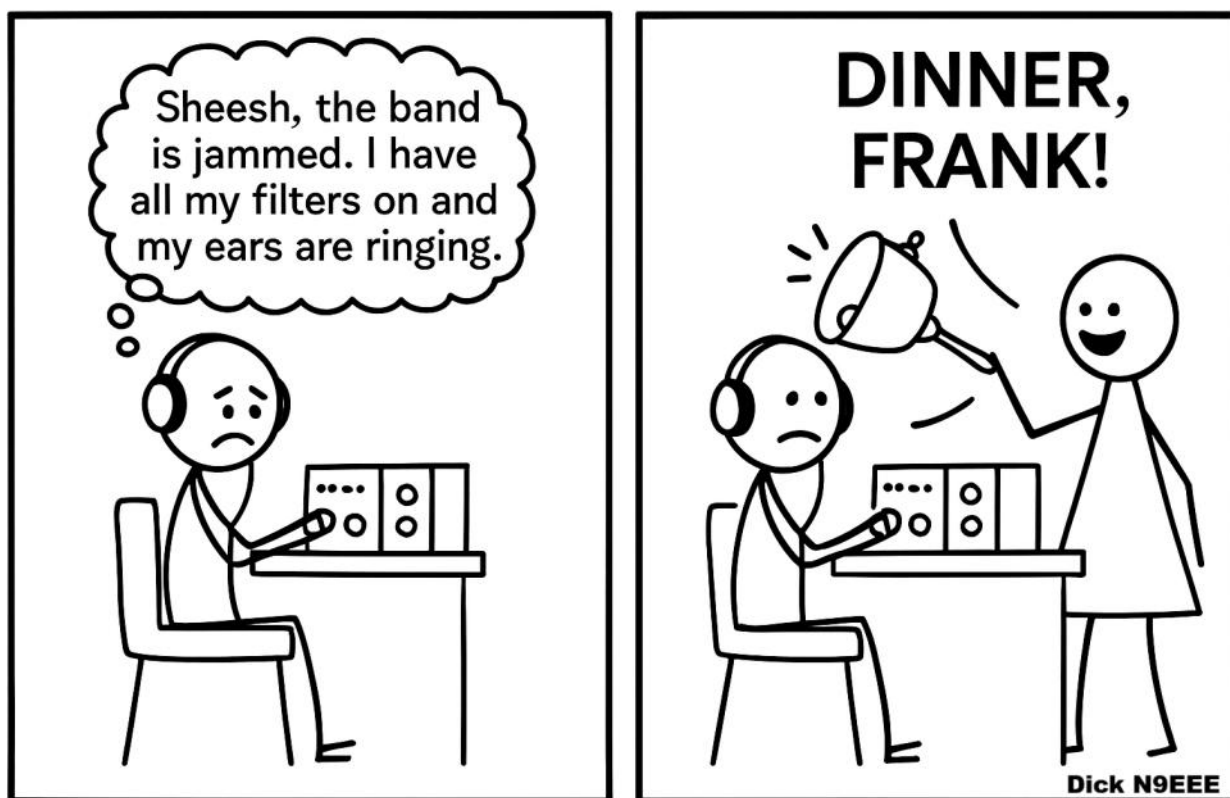


Thank you and, until the next News and Notes, Season's Greetings and QAC!

73, Duncan G3WZD (CWops #1979)

NewsAndNotes@CWops.org

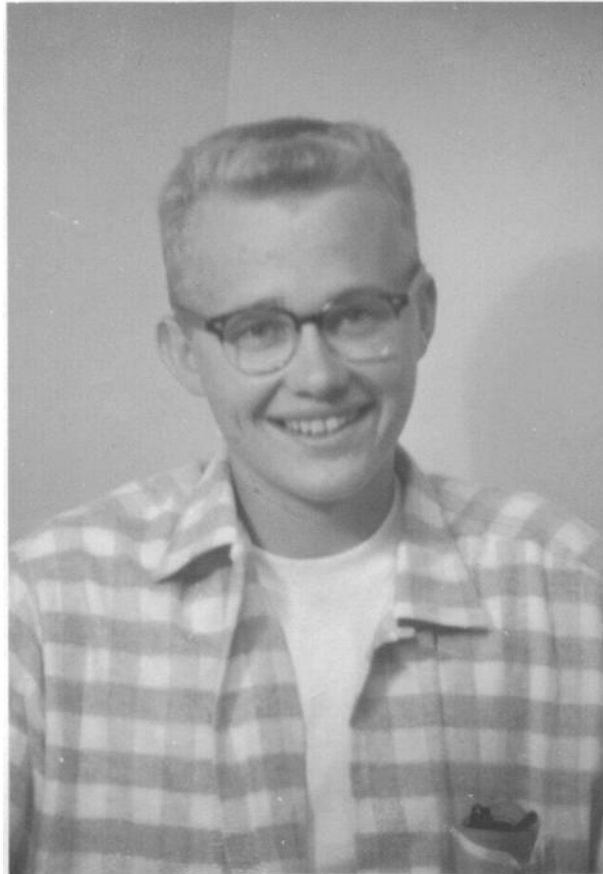
Hamming It Up



How We Were

[Ian Capon](#), GWØKRL

K6DGW, Fred Jensen, CWops #142



This photo was taken in the early summer of 1957 as I arrived at Oxford Hall, one of several student cooperative room and board houses at the University of California at Berkeley. I'm 16 in the photo, had my 17th birthday a couple of weeks after arriving. I had disassembled my rig at Mom and Dad's house in Los Angeles and packed it away in the closet of my bedroom, boarded a Western Airlines DC-6 [first airplane ride] and was beginning 5 years of college where ham radio would take a back seat to mathematics, engineering, physics, and a few monumental struggles with economics, literature, and organic chemistry. I joined the radio club [W6BB], we managed the first recording of Sputnik made in the SF Bay Area, and I managed to stay marginally active using the club station. Sadly, I do not have any photos of me with my rigs [my "rig" was always a work-in-progress as a teenager].

So now it's your turn, do you have a picture to share accompanied by a brief paragraph description, of your early days in radio, experimenting, exploring or just "being a ham".

Please send it to [Ian Capon](#).

73, Ian GWØKRL (CWops #2896)

Search Engine Query

[Bruce Campbell, W8HW](#) (CWops #958)

The question came to my mind, and perhaps you can help, what were the internet search engines before Google?

As many of you know, I owned a small internet company in the early 1990s. This was in addition to the two way dispatch radio company and both a large wide area paging company and smaller local area paging company dating back to 1980. The point is in the early 1990s, we used search engines on MS DOS (non-window) computers and Unix computers. Combining the value of each service we were able to offer unique services such as "email to (alphanumeric) pager" along with our email service itself.

The problem is that I tried to remember the search engines names and could not remember all the names. I guess time causes all of us to forget stuff. This caused me to do a search. I am certain that some names are missing from the search below. If any of you can remember the names. I would appreciate it if you could remind me, and hopefully you are entertained by this mind massage as well.

I thank you in advance, Bruce Campbell - W8HW@comcast.net

FYI - Timeline of major pre-Google search engines, that I could find:

- [Archie](#) (1990): — The first search engine, indexing FTP file names.
- [Gopher](#) (1991): A menu-based system for finding files, with tools like Veronica (1992) for searching Gopher menus.
- [Veronica](#) (1992)— Allowed searching of document titles on Gopher servers.
- [World Wide Web Wanderer](#) (1993) — The first web robot (spider) that indexed web sites to measure the web size.
- [JumpStation](#) (1993)— The first search engine to use a web crawler indexing titles and headings.
- [Aliweb](#) (1994)— The first search engine to index web content via webmaster-submitted index files.
- [WebCrawler](#) (1994): The first to provide full-text search, indexing entire web pages.
- [Lycos](#) (1994): — Indexed tens of millions of web documents, pioneered link-based relevance and page summaries.
- [Yahoo!](#) (1994): — Started as a directory and added search functionality.
- [Infoseek](#) (1995): Known for its speed and integration into browsers like Netscape.
- [Excite](#) (1995): — Used word relationships and statistical analysis for search relevance.
- [AltaVista](#) (1995): — Introduced natural language search and large-scale web indexing.
- [Ask Jeeves](#) (1996): Focused on natural language Q&A format.

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Mid-1990s: Other engines such as Inktomi, MetaCrawler, and Magellan, emerged, each adding new features like meta-search, natural language queries, human-edited answers, and paid advertising models.

Google launched in 1998 and quickly revolutionized search with its PageRank algorithm that used link analysis for ranking results.

Note: research for this article was performed by human recollection with assistance from Wikipedia.

SC

DX Marathon - 2025 Submissions

[Mark Wohlschlegel](#), WC3W (CWops #3525)

The DX Marathon 2025 submissions can be made now.

1. Generate an adif file of your log.
2. Simply go to entry.dxmarathon.com to create an entry form and submit your log (adif file).
3. Be sure to identify "club" as CWops. Only one club can be claimed.

CWops is in a friendly competition this year with SKCC (Straight Key Century Club) and LICW (Long Island CW Club). It really does not matter how few DX stations you have in your log in 2025. If every member working any number of DX stations does this, CWops members will accumulate a nice total club score.

If you have any questions in how to do this, contact wc3w@dxmarathon.com. You can upload as many times as you wish.

Final uploads can be made on or before January 5, 2026.

Just do it!

CW Academy as I Recall

[Rob Brownstein, K6RB](#) (CWops #3)

Those of you who attended the CWops dinner last May may recall that Don Greenbaum, N1DG, CWops #2, provided a capsule history of CWops. Who started it? Why they started it? And, so on. I was asked to do something similar for CW Academy. In retrospect, I wish I had saved all the early emails, suggestions, and lists of all who have been involved. But, I didn't. Who knew CWA would be the success that it has become?

So, this 79-year-old, who struggles to remember the names of authors and actors, is now struggling to remember the sequence of events that led to the creation and evolution of CW Academy. But, here goes.

CWops officially kicked off on January 1, 2010. The first edition of *Solid Copy* came out that February. From the get go, CWTs were being scheduled once a month. If you look at that first *Solid Copy* edition on the website, you'll see that my role was listed as publisher of the newsletter. Pete, W1RM, was president; Art, KZ5D, was vice president, we had our board of directors, and we looked like a club that had been in place for years, not just weeks.

As I recall, I was the one who came up with name "*Solid Copy*," so my reward was being given the job of editor/publisher. Remember that next time you volunteer to come up with a name. From its earliest days, the founders all agreed that CWops should have a minimum CW qualification level in order to become a member. We settled on 25 wpm. But, we also agreed that at some point we should have a program that helped people attain that level. In other words, we were not just going to pick the low-hanging fruit from operators who already were capable. We wanted to nurture those who aspired to be members so that they could leap over that rung.

Initially, we spent most of our efforts getting some kind of on-air activity going, and spreading the word about the club. To that end, I remember working with Art, KZ5D, on the CWT concept and CW Open. But, most of my time was spent editing and publishing *Solid Copy*.

The impetus to create that CW training program seemed to be less urgent than building up the club's membership by working and nominating operators who were more than qualified. There were a lot of them.

The Beginning

Again, as I recall, Pete, W1RM, had taken part in a Rookie Round Up event for CW mode and was appalled by the poor sending and copying of many of the rookies. He suggested that now was the time to focus on creating a training program, and without raising my hand, he asked me to come up with an outline and plan.

I already knew that we had some members with lots of CW training experience, one of whom was Jack Ritter, WØUCE (SK). Jack had trained lots of navy operators and had some very solid ideas about how best to do it. So, we put our heads together, and came up with a training program for those who knew Morse code but were in need of increasing their speed. You could say we came up with the intermediate and advanced course concepts based on improving existing CW skills

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rather than starting out with folks who knew no Morse at all (e.g. beginners).

Early on, I took a shot at framing up an 8-week program where students would have daily assignments and work on their own. Jack pointed out that it was missing a key ingredient – assessment and advice. We both agreed that assessment and advice meant real-time, live, teacher/student interaction. In places with clubs having dozens of potential students, it was possible that a location could be found that would permit the necessary interaction. But, what about the students located in places far removed from cities and large towns?

Here is where Jack really earned his stripes. He found an online application – OOVOO – that enabled you to see and hear one another, in real time, and it was free. Now, having a way to interact in real time, I revised my program to include twice weekly sessions of teacher and students using OOVOO. So, our first announcement of a training program – which I named CW Academy – was aimed at folks needing CW improvement, and the overwhelming response of those who wanted to sign up, were folks who were beginners! Oops. Back to the drawing board.

I quickly created a beginner program that I believed would satisfy the needs of most beginners, and I fit it into the same 8-week class structure. We would use the first five weeks to learn all 26 letters, 10 digits, and some punctuation, and spend the last three weeks putting what we learned into practice by learning how to use CW on the air.

To support the three training levels – beginner, intermediate and advanced – we created streaming CW files that were associated with daily assignments. There were copy-oriented exercises and sending-oriented exercises. And, at each of the twice weekly sessions, a teacher could assess how each of his/her five or six students could copy and send.

At this point, we had not yet started the formal training program. We were still putting in place all the pieces – streaming files, manuals, scheduling, and so on.

Our objective at the time was for beginners to go from no knowledge of Morse to 10 – 15 wpm within the eight weeks. Intermediate were to go from 10/15 to 15/20 and gain on-air QSO experience. And, advanced were to go from 15 to 25+ and gain enough experience to participate in our monthly (later biweekly and weekly) CWTs. It was intended that anyone who successfully completed the advanced course would also qualify as a member of CWops, having attained sufficient code speed skills. All they would then need were the QSOs, nominators and sponsors.

Putting It into Practice

I found a file on my system dating back to Jan/Feb 2013 that may well have been our first actual training sessions. There were 26 beginners, 15 intermediate and 2 advanced signups. All sign-up handling was done manually (by me) trying to juggle the availabilities of students with that of the teachers.

On the subject of teachers, early attempts at finding volunteers were somewhat thwarted by the word “teacher.” So, I made sure to explain that all teaching was built into the streaming files and Practice Instructions and Assignments documents. The volunteer’s job was to assess and advise,

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and they would be called “advisors.” That made a huge difference, and, it was also accurate.

The overall format of CWA classes has remained largely the same – eight-week programs, twice weekly online meetings, assessment and advice. We added a fourth session called “fundamental” which sits between beginner and intermediate. It was found that there was a need for further speed up in character-recognition before tackling the intermediate curriculum. So, fundamental level focuses on beefing up character-recognition and word-recognition.

Hiccups Along the Way

Like any newly launched endeavor such as CW Academy, there were going to be some false starts and stops, revisions and the like. The OOVOO app served us for a while but could become grouchy when six people were interacting. So, we moved on to Zoom. Zoom could handle the load okay but had a tendency to do strange things to sent code because of its noise-reduction algorithms. So, we tried other apps, too. Essentially, most of us now rely on Zoom and have found ways to overcome the noise-reduction issues. Many advisors make use of the separate “rooms” capability of Zoom to break up the group into pairs for practice, for example.

The original streamed files have been modified such that the content is ham-radio related rather than all over the map. And, the class manuals have been edited and revised to sync up with changes to files and practices.

One of the hiccups was we use two freebie programs – Morse Runner and RufzXP – for practicing call sign copy and contest-type exchanges. There have been issues where students using Apple systems had problems with those programs. Most have been resolved by running a Windows emulator under the Apple OS and running the programs on that surrogate.

Other Considerations

From the outset, I decided that people who spent the time helping others with CW skills, voluntarily, should be recognized. So, I created a service awards program whereby those who have advised at least six groups receive a first plaque. Those who have advised 12, receive a second plaque. Those who have advised 24 receive a leather bomber jacket with club logo and “Master Advisor” embroidered on it. For a while that was sufficient because if you taught one group, three times per year, it took eight years to receive a jacket. But, happily, several advisors have gone well beyond 24. So, at 48, they receive an iPad. And, at 60, they receive a choice of Begali or N3ZN paddle.

As the program grew, it was clear that manually trying to align students and advisors was becoming untenable. Jerry Weisskohl, AC4BT, took the reigns and began systematizing the process just in time for a major influx in signups. Later, Bob Carter, WR7Q, and Roland Smith, K7OJL, have taken CW Academy and all its underlying aspects to a whole new level. The signup process is fully automated as is the assignment of students to advisors. It is an amazingly well-run operation deserving of respect and praise.

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In Sum

CW Academy is probably the best-known aspect of CWops, right up there alongside CWT. Our aspiration to help prospective members meet the qualifications had given birth to a CW training program without equal in ham radio. Since the first sessions, we have trained some thousands of hams, a lot of whom became CWops members. When you listen to participation in Sweepstakes CW, CQ WW CW, and the weekly CWTs, you can hear many of those who thought they were stuck at 13 wpm who are now trucking along at 25 plus. Finally, it gives me great pleasure to see that many of my former CWA students have become outstanding CWA advisors.

SC

CW Academy

Session Dates

January / February

May / June

September / October

Learning Levels

Beginner

Fundamental

Intermediate

Advanced



VBand: 599 Every Time

[Dick Strassburger](#), N9EEE (CWops #3113)

While this article is aimed primarily at CW Academy advisors seeking a higher quality medium for class sessions and student practices than the fickleness Zoom provides, it is equally valuable for students who want a safe, reliable environment for practice QSOs. No QRM. No QRN. No QSB. No feedback or echoing. No time wasted resetting audio filters or troubleshooting Zoom connectivity. Simply connect and carry on.

As a CW Academy Beginner-Level Advisor, it is essential that my students have an easy and reliable way to be heard while sending and copying code in our twice weekly Zoom classes. As a former student myself, I learned quickly that Zoom is a poor tool for CW instruction. The “oscillator” in the student shack is usually a radio sidetone several feet from the computer microphone, resulting in ambient noise, echo, distortion, and often barely audible code. Beginner students—already overwhelmed with learning an audio language—struggle to configure Zoom’s audio filters, and those settings reset every time Zoom closes. I routinely spent the first 10–15 minutes of each class helping students become “audible” to Zoom. What a waste of valuable learning time. And even when it worked, the sound source was far enough away to be distracting. Zoom simply wasn’t designed for this purpose.

Ham Radio Solutions is the brainchild of Byon Garrabrant and David Steffen, two IT guys with a desire to practice Morse code with each other without relying on RF propagation. They put their expertise to work and created VBand (Virtual CW Band), along with two companion products—the CW Hotline and the USB Adaptor—that interface seamlessly with that virtual space.

VBand

VBand is a free service that allows users to send and receive on virtual channels, use keyboards or USB paddles, view decoded text, and even hold live QSOs with other operators or a bot. It simulates 599 on-air conditions and is ideal for skill building. The virtual channels are “open,” meaning anyone can join at any time—just like being on the air.

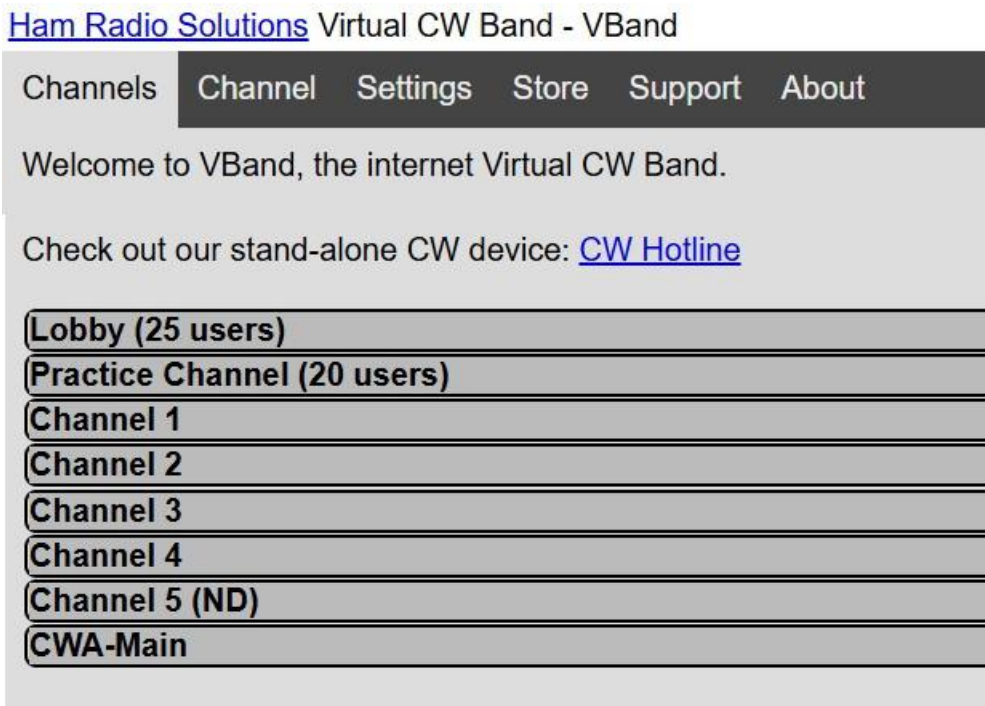
A newer feature allows users to create private channels accessible only via a key code. This is how I run my Beginner class. Before private channels existed, non-students would occasionally join our sessions, unaware that a class was in progress. Being CW operators, they were always polite and left immediately, but private channels eliminated the interruption entirely.

The listening experience on VBand is excellent. I can choose to hear each operator’s individually selected tone or set a universal tone for the entire group. Students have the same option and often prefer a single tone so they can focus on character recognition without the distraction of varying pitches. It’s so much easier to evaluate a student’s progress when you can actually hear their sending and not some screechy sound dropping out characters.

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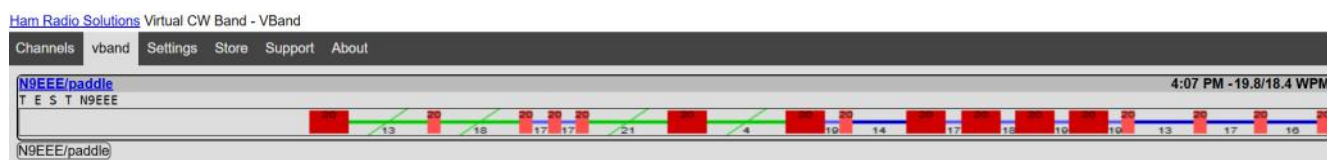
Screenshot of the Channels page. CWA-Main was my private channel for this story.

Now, don't cringe—but VBand includes a decoder. We're all trained to avoid these demons, but I've learned to embrace its strengths while guarding against its weaknesses. Used with discipline, it becomes a powerful teaching tool. My students understand that copying must be done by ear, not by charts or decoders. Since "head copy" is introduced from day one, no bad habits form. So, the decoder is used as a sending aid and only to evaluate character formation.

Students treat the decoder like a report card. I can lecture endlessly about spacing and timing, but when the decoder shows that their "R" was actually an "E N," the lesson lands instantly. That kind of immediate reinforcement is invaluable. As part of their daily sending practice, students use VBand to check their character formation. Score one for the decoder—but that's where its role ends.

My students embrace head copy from Day One at the Beginner Level, and they don't want to cheat themselves by watching the decoder while someone else is sending. If students are disciplined, they simply turn the decoder off. If I see the temptation is too strong, I can create a private channel with the decoder disabled entirely.

Again, it's a sending tool and when used properly, it's a helpful visual aid for understanding and correcting the difference between, say, a "N T" and a "K".



Private channel with Decoder and Timing Stats enabled.

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There are two ways to connect to VBand: the USB Adaptor or CW Hotline. Each has its own advantages, and the choice is purely personal preference.

USB Adaptor

The simplest way to connect to VBand is with the Ham Radio Solutions USB Adaptor (USD \$25). It plugs between your paddle and a USB-C to USB-A cable connected to your computer. All settings are controlled directly on the VBand website. That can't be any simpler.



USB Adaptor is lit in blue. It features a 3.5mm jack for your key. It utilizes a USB-C to USB-A cable connection to your computer..

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[Ham Radio Solutions](#) Virtual CW Band - VBand

Channels Channel Settings Store Support About

Callsign - Name:

Mode:

Volume:30

Keyer Speed:20 WPM

Tone:700Hz

Decoded Text Max Length:80

Min Latency:750 (750 recommended)

☐ Flip Paddle

☐ Enable QSOBot

☐ Auto Character Spacing

☐ Enable Touch Pads

☐ Enable Scratchpad

☐ Same Tone for all

☐ Use Mouse Buttons (not usually recommended)

☐ Debug Timing (when working with our team)

☐ Show Timing Stats

Private Channels

- CWA-Main

Learn more about [CW Hotline](#)

A nice menu of features to consider.

CW Hotline

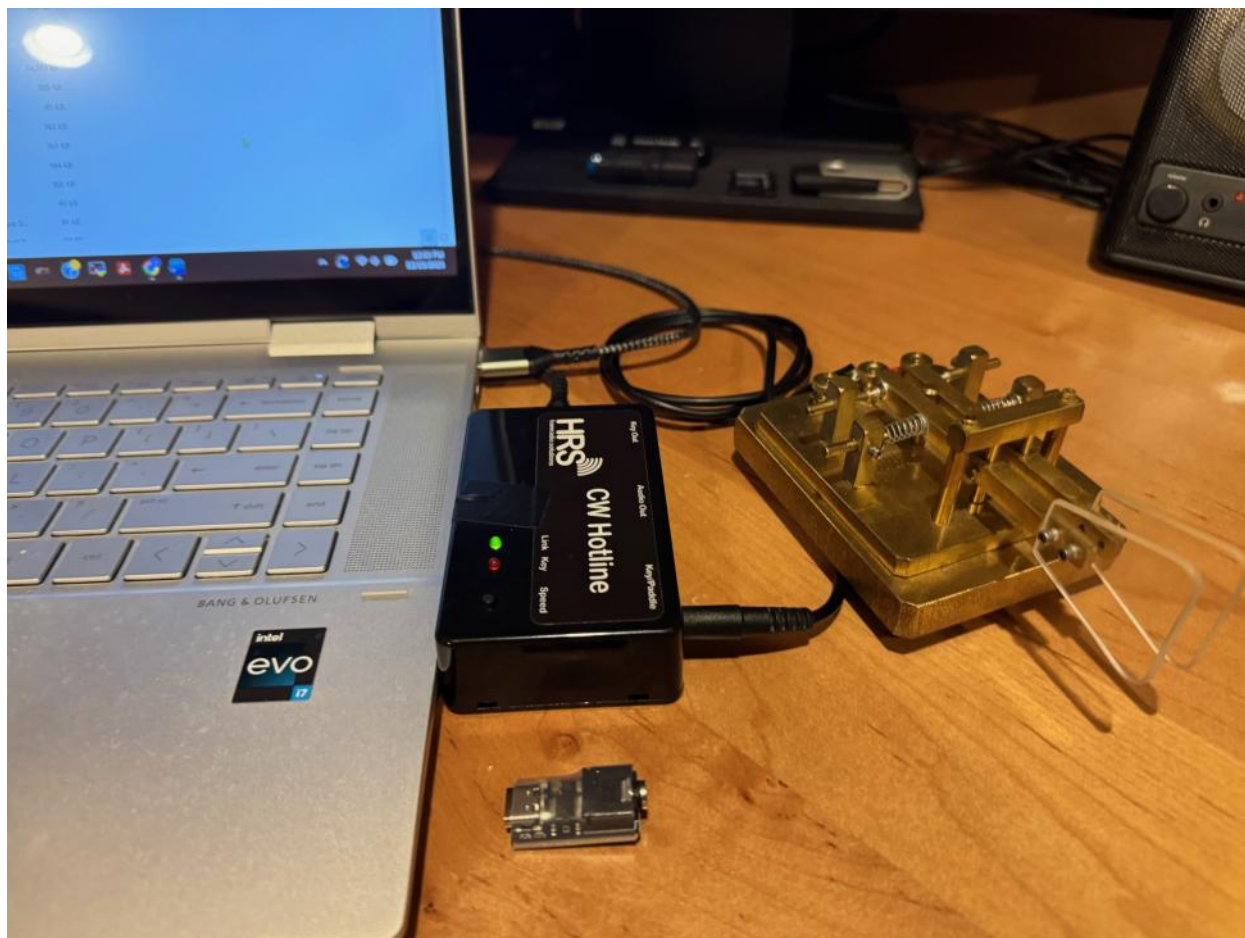
CW Hotline (USD \$50 kit, \$100 built) has multiple uses: an interface with VBand, a standalone code oscillator, or - when paired with another CW Hotline unit - can serve as a private channel. It can also enable a Remote Radio connection between your paddle and a distant radio.

Most of the settings, including tone, speed, and volume are controlled on the website, but speed can also be adjusted locally using a push button atop the unit.

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CW Hotline, 4"x2"x1". The green light indicates it is linked to VBand. Note how small the USB Adaptor is in comparison.

The greatest advantage of the CW Hotline is that it gives mobile students a compact, self-contained CW oscillator that's easy to take anywhere.

Latency

My own experience is that the USB Adaptor with VBand has no noticeable latency. I can send Morse code and hear it simultaneously on VBand making this a very practical and dependable alternative to using a local oscillator or traveling with a CW Hotline. A strong internet connection is imperative – my mobile hotspot has yet to let me down. To put this to the test, I've held three different Beginners Level Classes with VBand neither I nor any of the students have encountered latency or drop-out issues.

CW Hotline's architecture, by contrast, introduces a perceived one-second delay between touching the paddle and the code being heard by others on VBand. (Note: the operator of the CW Hotline only hears code from the local oscillator, not VBand). This delay isn't a deal-breaker for practice or class sessions.

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The operator always hears their code in real time through the local oscillator, and other students hear the transmitted code jointly on VBand. The only time the delay becomes apparent is if the sender has their microphone open in Zoom and hears both the oscillator and VBand at once. When everyone wears wired headphones and keeps their mics off, issues disappear.

Summary

Less time spent wrestling with Zoom's low-quality audio and connectivity issues means more time for meaningful group practice on VBand.

I can have a practice QSO with a student and not worry about whether RF propagation will support our QSO.

VBand's channel structure makes it easy: private channels for class, open channels for spontaneous practice or meeting other beginners.

Latency won't be an issue for those using the USB Adaptor with a good internet connection. You can hear your dits and dahs in real time as if the oscillator was local. Latency is not an issue for CW Hotline users. Just don't invite feedback issues as can occur with an open mic.

As advisors, we encourage our students to use headphones that block room noise and outside audio distractions. I've heard of students struggling with sending code and hearing it much later in their headphones. Often, the culprit is the delay between the computer and Bluetooth headphones. Use wired headphones.

I run my Beginner class with Zoom and VBand side-by-side—Zoom for discussion, VBand for sending and copying. Student adoption has been enthusiastic. The cost is negligible. Class time has been reclaimed. And the results across multiple sessions have been remarkable. My 60-minute classes have been extended—by student request—to 90 minutes so they can practice more...and have more fun. (We play Morse games.) As one student, Lewis N5DV, put it: "I can't imagine doing this any other way." And nothing makes an Advisor happier than hearing that students enjoy class but also meet outside class to practice with each other—on VBand.

Remote Radio Update

CW Hotline was originally created to be used for Morse code practice between two or more operators in separate locations. Extend this concept and CW Hotline can be used to send Morse code remotely between two or more units to enable CW in a remote radio. I have used CW Hotline for this purpose in my Remote Radio configuration for most of 2025 until I discovered that the USB Adapter and VBand provide the same result with less equipment needed to haul around. All I needed was my laptop, paddles, and a USB Adaptor...I'm on the air.

See my article about Remote Radio in [Solid Copy, March 2025](#) issue for more details on remote operation.





'Twas The Night Before Christmas

with an assist from Microsoft Copilot



'Twas the night before Christmas, and all through
the shack,
Not a signal was stirring from 160 on back.
The antennas were tuned with meticulous care,
In hopes that rare DX soon would be there.

The rig's LEDs cast a soft, festive glow,
While the waterfall drifted like digital snow.
My paddles were polished, my headphones just
right,
As I settled in warmly for one more cold night.

When out on the bands there arose such a clatter,
I spun the big knob to see what was the matter.
Up past the noise floor it grew like a flash,
Hoping it wasn't just holiday hash.

The S-meter jumped — a strong signal, no tricks.
Could it be Santa with his sleigh full of kits?
More rapid than testers his dits and dahs came,
And he whistled and called each reindeer by name:

"On Dasher, on Dancer, on 20 and 40!
On Donner, on Blitzen, conditions look sporty!
From the top of the tower to the ends of the earth,
Let's give every ham a warm Christmas berth!"

I answered his CQ with a trembling fist,
Praying my call wouldn't end up dismissed.
But Santa came back with two dits in his tone,
As if he'd been working me all night alone.

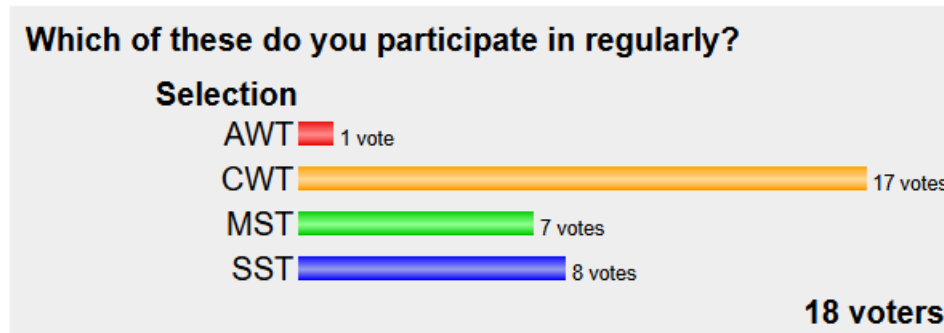
He gave me an RST solid and clean,
The best I had copied since solar Cycle 19.
We chatted of sleigh routes and propagation lore,
Of auroras, grey lines, and DXpeditions galore.

Then fading at last as the band slipped away,
He signed off with cheer in the old fashioned way:
"Merry Christmas to all, may your signals be bright,
And to all hams on Earth — 73 and good night!"



Keyed Up

November Poll



Soapbox:

KN4NTU: Thanks to all who run and call the SST. It is very helpful.

VK5GG: I enjoy the AWT when I join in - nice to catch some of the JA ops on the air. I also join in as many CWTs as I can, running 100w or 5w QRP, with a mix of running and S&P.

Victor: Due to HOA, I am limited to wire antennas and low power (typically 100 watts). S&P works best for me.

December Poll

“In the past year, how many times have you activated for Parks On The Air?”

Your choices are: 0, 1, < 5, < 10, 10+

Every vote counts!

Take the poll: <https://cwops.org/keyed-up/>. Leave a comment.

Check the results in next month's *Solid Copy*.

New Members

Trung Nguyen, W6TN

With great pleasure we welcome the following new members to CWops:

<u>CWops</u>	<u>Call</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>CWops</u>	<u>Call</u>	<u>Name</u>
3842	KZ5Z	Jon	3845	KØWEW	Kent
3843	AG7GP*	Amy	3846	K5BRY*	Joe
3844	DF6FQ	Jürgen	3847	WC1M*	Dick

* Lifetime member

As of December 8, 2025:

Need Sponsors: SM7WNM, W6JSV, KE8UEX

Invitations Extended: I1YRL, 7Q6UJ

For more details about nominees and up-to-date status, check the [“Members only”](#) page on the website. For information about joining CWops, check the [“Membership”](#) page on the website.

Notes: If you have updated your personal info, e.g., new QTH, new callsign, or additional callsign, please send it to membership@cwops.org so I can add it to the roster. Vice versa, if your callsign becomes inactive I can remove it, too. Then the roster will be accurate and current for our usage.

73, Trung W6TN (CWops #1707)

Membership Manager

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DUES REMINDER

It may be time to renew your membership.

Check the [member roster](#) for the expiration date of your membership. If it shows 2025...

Renew online today.

<https://store.cwops.org/>

CWops dues

One Year \$15.00 USD ▼

Five Years \$60.00 USD ▼

Life Membership \$125.00 USD ▼



Giving Back Update

[Rob Brownstein](#), **K6RB** (CWops #3)

CWops' Giving Back (GB) program is meant to provide on-air QSO experience and practice for anyone who wants it. It was initially intended as a way for our CW Academy students to get some on-air experience. We all know that when there is activity on the bands, these days, it's usually a DXpedition pileup or a contest. Today's CW aspirants have had little chance to work others who are skilled at CW, operate at moderate speed, and are committed to helping. That's the mission of Giving Back. The GB volunteers get on the air at approximately 7 pm local time and seek out CQers, or call CQ, and engage in routine QSOs including some conversational tidbits. The operators' schedule appears on the next page.

Here are the November 2025 results (GB hosts are shown in **bold**):

GW2CWO	DL8MGD SP9XG HA8BR	PA7RA SO1UP TF3IG	DK5LN 9A2UU YT1FEM	F6FLH YO2VB IK2ZLM	OK2BVX OK1UKC SP3DGV	OH1KBX DL1AXC EW6LW	DK1BZT OK1GOD EW8OC
JG1BGT	JK1QYL	JO1DGE					
JG1UQD	JF1LXO	D9ØYG	JA8XOT	JF6AOI	JK1WCW		
JJ1FXF	JR4SXV JQ3FRX	BD3OIT ZL3TK	BG2KYH	JR3QLI/3	BD2QAB	JA4DCS	JA4IJ
JK1QYL	JJ6MDA JL7IPY	JF1LXO JG1BGT	JA6TSJ JO1DGE	JA6PWF JA4MRL	JA4IJ(2) JK1WCW	8J1ITA JE6AJO	JM4AOA JH2ACP
JM4AOA	BG5UND	JF1LXO	JK1QYL	JK1WCW			
JO1DGE	HL5JZ JR4SXV	JA3EBL JR6SBI	JA4DCS	JA4IJ	JE6ACP	JG1BGT	JK1QYL
JQ3FRX	JH4EMX 7N2XZB(2) JK3HTE	JR3PDI JN3DOR JA3WQX/2	JF9GDP JJ6MDA JA9BGL	JS3COV JK1WCW JA3JND/QRP	JL3HUW KF3AUB JP3TMW	JA1COD JS3UWJ JP1KSI	JA2DHF JK3OTH JH5GEN
K7NJ	VA3RTU WB5DRG KI7NTK	W6KN KFØNWC N8DXZ	WA7WKY KD3BOJ N9FGC	W2AZZ WB2SMK WA7AXT	KN6QER VE7XXG XE1QLW	VE4BWG KN5Z NØIQM	AA6GA WT9L N3JJT
MØWDD	DL4VH	DL8FMA	EA3LA	IK1NAF	MØIYP		
N7DZ	KI7CFO AE4JM WDØANB	NM5M NZ9R N5WBF	K7TRT VE3DQ WBØVPS	W9RF K5KVQ K6ZGN	KN6UDK K4GM WB6CIA	WAØJLY NN7M W9LG	K3IV WN5C AEØCW
W5DT	K2IWG	N4QWZ	KD1MD	KG5HSB			
W8OV	N2KW KA9PQB	N2JPR	WT2D	N3HAM	KG5SSB (2)	KA3KYF	N9FGC
7J1ATG	JA3EBL	JN1FAO	JS2OVO	JF7NWP	JA7WTH	JG7AJE	JE6AJO

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7L2VPL	DU3EA UAØCKD BI4THF	J16MDA JJ5MKY	8J1ITA JK1WCW	JJØSFV JR1GLL	J11EHJ JJ2OXS	JA41IJ JQ2VGG	HL1MIM N7DX
7N2XZB	HL1MIM JR4SXV	JQ3FRX BG2HE	BI4JCR(2)	JE6AJO	JF1LXO	J16MDA	JE6ACP

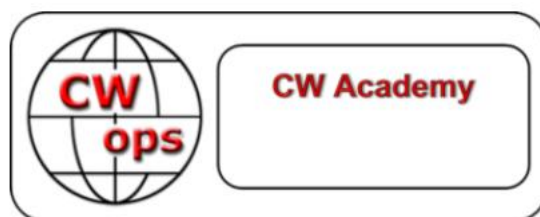
Giving Back Operating Schedule - 7 PM Local												
October - April: 40m & 80m May - September: 40m & 20m												
Frequencies: 7.035 - 7.039, 3.535 - 3.539, 14.035 - 14.039 MHz JA - 7.028 +/-												
UTC+10	UTC+9	UTC+7	UTC+3	UTC+2	UTC+1	UTC/BST	UTC-1	New York UTC-4	Chicago UTC-5	Denver UTC-6	Los Angeles UTC-7	Hawaii UTC-10
MON												
VK1CWO	JØ1DGE							W2XS	W8OV			
	JG1GBT											
TUE												
	JR1WYW	E25JRP		SV2BBK		GW2CWO		WE5P	K8UDH	K7NJ	W7ZDX	
	7N2XZB											
WED												
	7J1ATG							N8DD			N7DZ	
THURS												
	7N2XZB			SV2BBK				KV8Q	N5OT	K7NJ	W7ZDX	
	JG1BGT							W7IY				
	JQ3FRX											
FRI												
	JK1QYL			SV2BBK		GW2CWO		N2GSL	AAØYY		K6RB	
						MØWDD						
SAT												
	JJ1FXF							W5DT				
	JM4AOA											
	JG1UQD											
SUN												
	JJ1FXF							W5DT				
	JM4AOA											
	7L1VPL											



CW Academy

[Bob Carter](#), WR7Q and [Roland Smith](#), K7OJL

**CW Academy Goes Global:
Native Language Classes Now Available!**



We are pleased to announce a major expansion of the CW Academy catalog! Starting with the 2026 January/February semester, advisors are now equipped to offer our highly sought-after classes in multiple languages, making Morse Code accessible to a wider global audience.

The Initial Rollout

The current catalog reflects this new multilingual capability with classes available in four languages besides English. The response has been immediate and strong, with 54 students already requesting classes in these new languages—and that number is growing daily!

Language	Available Levels
Catalan	Beginner, Fundamental
German	Beginner, Fundamental, Intermediate
Polish	Beginner, Fundamental
Greek	Intermediate

How the Multilingual Capability Works

This new capability isn't just a simple language tag; it required a significant infrastructure effort. Here's a look at the requirements and the mechanics that bring these international classes to life:

Meeting the Challenge

Before a class can be offered in a new language, the following requirements must be met to ensure a high-quality student experience:

Dedicated Advisors: We need advisors who are fluent and committed to teaching the curriculum in the specific target language.

Curriculum Translation: The entire curriculum must be accurately translated.

Long-Term Commitment: Advisors must commit to continuing to offer the Beginner and Fundamental Level classes in future semesters to maintain continuity for students.

Minimum Offering: At least the Beginner Level and Fundamental Level classes must be available to establish a training path.

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More Than Just Translation

Meeting the translation requirement is more complex than simply running the material through an AI tool. While AI can translate the text quickly, the core pedagogical material often needs human adaptation.

For example, the Beginner Level Session One homework is built around practicing the Morse code patterns for A, E, N, and T. It uses simple English words made up of these letters (e.g., TEA, TEE, ATE). These letter combinations are unlikely to be valid words in the target language. Therefore, a new, culturally appropriate, and phonetically suitable set of practice words must be developed for every translated curriculum.

Matching Students and Classes

The process for matching students to classes is seamless:

Advisor Designation: When an advisor signs up to teach, they specify the language for their class, and this information is stored in the class catalog.

Student Preference: When a student registers, they specify their preferred language.

Catalog Display: The class catalog then filters and displays all classes being offered in the student's preferred language, alongside all classes offered in English.

Enrollment: The student can then select the class that best meets their needs.

Call to Action: The Demand is Real

The initial success confirms that the demand for classes in native languages is extremely high. We currently have more students requesting classes in their native languages than we have available seats.

Furthermore, student requests are piling up for classes in several other major world languages, including:

- Spanish
- Portuguese
- French
- Dutch

To meet this global demand, we urgently need experienced advisors willing to commit to teaching in these languages. If you are an experienced CW Academy advisor fluent in one of these languages, please consider volunteering to help us bring the joy of CW to the next generation of international operators!

If you have any questions, suggestions, or comments please contact either Bob Carter WR7Q (kcgator@gmail.com) or Roland Smith K7OJL (rolandksmith@gmail.com)

73, Roland K7OJL CWA Co-Admin



CWops Tests (CWTs)

[Rich Ferch](#), VE3KI

With the end of the year fast approaching, this might be a good time to describe how the awards process works.

The first step is for participants to submit their claimed scores at 3830scores.com after each CWT, as that is how the scores enter the scoring system.

Reported scores from all the CWTs except for the very first one in January 2010 have been recorded and saved in the contest claimed scores database at 3830scores.com. It is possible to access those scores from that website either by callsign or by the contest name, date and time. However, for our purposes it is more efficient to manage scores by collecting them into a single locally-stored database containing only CWT scores for the current year. The 3830scores.com website has facilitated this by providing an API that the CWT manager can use to download recent CWT claimed scores in xml format from time to time, for example weekly or monthly.

The biggest difficulty in automating the calculation of participation scores is the task of associating station call signs with the operator to whom award credit is to be given. You can help smooth this part of the process by taking care that the "Operator(s) Call(s)" box in the score submittal form at 3830scores.com for your submitted claimed scores contains the operator's (your) home callsign (the callsign to which the score is to be attributed), and that that callsign is spelled correctly (not fat-fingered with wrong or extra numbers or letters).

While the majority of score entries are straightforward (station callsign and operator callsign are the same), special cases (such as portable operation with callsign modifiers, club or contest call signs, mis-spelled call signs, names or numbers entered instead of call signs, and so on) have proven over the years to be difficult to handle reliably. This task has been dealt with by constructing and using a database of mappings between the callsign data as received in score reports and the operators' home call signs. This database is built on the fly as score reports are received. The database ensures that each decision on how to deal with a particular combination of on-air callsign, operator callsign and station callsign need only be made once, the first time that combination is encountered. After the first time, further recurrences can be handled automatically.

I have developed a computer program (a Python "script") that can download the latest group of claimed scores from 3830scores.com and add it to a local database, updating a second database of mappings as needed during the process. The program can then calculate the participation scores for participants and create the toplist report and other reports. The program also enables cross-checks against the CWops member roster both to determine eligibility for gold, silver and bronze medallions and to detect cases where the same member (same membership number) enters scores under multiple call signs. It can create local archive files of the received scores and offers editing capabilities for both the score and mappings databases. It can also produce a variety of supplementary reports, including statistical data to help in ongoing management of the CWTs. This all operates quite smoothly during the year, so much so that I find the most difficult part of the job to be writing this monthly column for *Solid Copy*.

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At the end of the year, or rather during the first few days of the next year, there is a flurry of activity. Reminder messages about the certificates and medallions are sent to the groups.io reflector and by email blast to non-subscribers. The computer program is used to produce a report containing the call signs of all CWT participants during the year together with the award level achieved (gold, silver, bronze or participant). This report is sent to Fabian, DJ5CW for use on the web page where participants can download their PDF certificates. Another report lists the gold, silver and bronze medal qualifiers for publication in *Solid Copy*, and a third report is prepared for use by K6RB in keeping track of orders for medallions.

CWT participants, whether CWops members or not, can download their PDF certificate from DJ5CW's website at <<https://cwops.telegraphy.de/certificate/>>. CWops members who have qualified for a medallion may order their medallion from the payment page on the CWops website during the first two months of the following year. Those orders are collected by Rob Brownstein, K6RB, who orders the medallions from the supplier and arranges for their distribution via snail mail, with the help of other volunteers for mailings to locations outside the US. The entire process takes several months.

All of this has been made possible by the existence of the 3830scores.com website and the ability of CWT participants to post their scores there. The current computer program was developed when the owner of that website, Bruce Horn WA7BNM, made available a method for downloading score postings in xml format. All of this has helped make the continued success of the CWT awards program possible, and CWops is indebted to Bruce for the help he and the 3830scores.com website have provided.

Enjoy the CWTs and keep those reported scores coming!

73, Rich VE3KI (CWops #783)
CWT Manager



CWops Member Awards

[Bill Gilliland](#), WØTG



Monthly Update

The January 2026 Member Awards summary will reflect the final QSO totals for 2025. Please submit your December logs by January 2, 2025, so they may be included. ACA and ACMA QSO totals will revert to zero to begin the new year on January 3, 2026.

During November, four additional members submitted logs, and the number of active participants in the awards program is currently 243.

The **ACA** QSO totals and rankings for the end of November 2025 have **KR2Q** in first place and leading second place **AA3B** by 128 QSOs. The top ten ACA totals this month are: **(1) KR2Q, (2) AA3B, (3) KY4GS (4) K3WW, (5) N5RZ, (6) DL6KVA, (7) KG9X, (8) N5TJ, (9) KO4VW and (10) KC7V**. The separation between first place and tenth place is 514 QSOs.

The **ACMA** QSO totals and rankings for the end of November 2025 have **AA3B** in first place and leading second place **KR2Q** by 844 QSOs. The top ten ACMA totals this month are: **(1) AA3B, (2) KR2Q, (3) K3WW, (4) N5RZ, (5) DL6KVA, (6) KY4GS, (7) OM2VL, (8) NA8V, (9) N5ZO and (10) N5TJ**. The separation between first place and tenth place is 2367 QSOs.

The **CMA** QSO totals and rankings for the end of November 2025 have **AA3B** in first place and leading second place **K3WW** by 3590 QSOs. The top ten CMA totals this month are: **(1) AA3B, (2) K3WW, (3) N5RZ, (4) KR2Q, (5) N5ZO, (6) DL6KVA, (7) NA8V, (8) W1RM, (9) F6HKA and (10) VE3KI**. The separation between first place and tenth place is 6883 QSOs.

The number of participants who have contacted CWops members in 100 or more **DXCC** entities increased to **97** this month with the addition of **K7QA**.

The number of participants who have accomplished CWops **WAS** remained at **276** this month.

You can see complete rankings for all award categories at <https://cwops.telegraphy.de/scores>.

CWops Award Tools Participation

At the end of 2024 we had 280 active participants in the Member Awards Program. As of December 1, 2025, we have 243 active participants. If you have not submitted any logs for 2025, please do so soon, and we can include your score among the participants.

The Top 100 and the Searchable and Sortable Scores Table show rankings and scores for active participants only. To be an active participant and be included in awards scoring including the ACA, ACMA and CMA competitions, you must have submitted a log during the current year. To see rankings and scores for both active and inactive participants please use the Score Overview Table where inactive participants are listed with ACA and ACMA scores of zero, but their scores in other categories are listed at the highest level that was previously submitted.

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You can see the final 2024 scores or final scores for any other year by going to the Score Overview Table and selecting the desired year from the "Final scores:" list at the top of the page.

All scores categories on the page will then show the final scores and standings for the end of the selected year.

The Searchable and Sortable Table can graph your current year's ACA scores by date and allows you to compare your progression to that of others. Check the Plot button for the calls you wish to see plotted and they will all appear on the same graph.

The CWops Award Tools website main page provides a means of printing your CWT Participation Certificate. You may request a downloadable certificate by clicking the "CWT certificate download" selection at the top of the page. For more information about CWT Participation Awards, please go to <https://cwops.org/cwops-tests/>.

CWops Member Awards Program Overview

Several operating awards are available for contacting CWops members. These include **Annual Competition Award (ACA)** recognizing the total number of CWops members contacted during the current year, **Annual Cumulative Membership Award (ACMA)** counting QSOs with members on all bands (once per band) during the current year, **Cumulative Membership Award (CMA)** counting QSOs with members on all bands (once per band) since January 3, 2010, **CWops WAS** award for contacting members in all 50 states, **CWops DXCC** award for contacting members in countries on the ARRL DXCC list, **CWops WAE** award for contacting members in Europe, and **CWops WAZ** award for contacting members in each of the 40 CQ zones. All contacts must be via CW and between current CWops members. To qualify for these awards, you must submit your logs via the tool at the CWops Award Tools [website](#). You can also print out your awards certificates at that same website.

A set of tools for managing your awards status is provided on the CWops Award Tools website and if you regularly upload your logs your awards will be automatically tracked for you. To view complete data for all currently active participants and see where you and others rank among active participants in the awards program, use the [online tools](#). For more details on the tools provided, see the [August 2021 Solid Copy](#) article.

Please Join Us!

Fabian, DJ5CW, who created the website and the tools, made it extremely easy to participate in the awards program.

If you are not among the CWops members who are currently participating, please join us! It adds a lot of friendly competition and fun to your operating.

More Information

View our website for more information on the [CWops Awards Program](#). Send your feedback, questions or comments to cwopscam@w0tg.com.

73, Bill WØTG (CWops #1873)

CWops Operating Awards

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Here are the Top 100 ACA, ACMA and CMA QSO totals as of December 5, 2025.

ACA

Rank	Call	ACA
1	KR2Q	1842
2	AA3B	1714
3	KY4GS	1662
4	K3WW	1530
5	N5RZ	1477
6	DL6KVA	1442
7	KG9X	1339
8	N5TJ	1338
9	KO4VW	1335
10	KC7V	1328
11	NA8V	1325
12	K7QA	1298
13	OM2VL	1278
14	N5ZO	1264
15	AA2IL	1263
16	F6HKA	1258
17	W4CMG	1188
18	WT9U	1183
19	K1VUT	1152
20	VE3TM	1129
21	N7US	1125
22	NJ3K	1096
23	KC3M	1093
24	WT3K	1058
25	W9ILY	1039
26	K1AJ	1037
27	K3QP	1022
28	NE2V	1019
29	KM4FO	1013
30	EA1X	1009
31	WN7S	1004
32	K1DJ	996
33	K9WX	995
34	W8FN	992
35	K6NR	983
36	EA6BF	982
36	K3JT	982
37	AD5A	975
38	K1SM	961
39	F5SGI	952
40	VK2GR	951
41	KT5V	932
41	NA4J	932

ACMA

Rank	Call	ACMA
1	AA3B	6100
2	KR2Q	5256
3	K3WW	4526
4	N5RZ	4506
5	DL6KVA	4415
6	KY4GS	4096
7	OM2VL	3811
8	NA8V	3778
9	N5ZO	3770
10	N5TJ	3733
11	K7QA	3595
12	KC7V	3593
13	KO4VW	3433
14	KG9X	3344
15	WT9U	2977
16	AA2IL	2938
17	K1VUT	2837
18	F6HKA	2767
19	W4CMG	2562
20	N7US	2494
21	VE3TM	2390
22	EA1X	2380
23	AD5A	2370
24	K1AJ	2355
25	NJ3K	2281
26	EA6BF	2259
27	WN7S	2244
28	K9WX	2219
29	W9ILY	2207
30	KC3M	2193
31	K6NR	2191
32	WS7L	2123
33	W8FN	2066
34	K1DJ	2053
35	N5XE	2024
36	DM6EE	2020
37	KW7Q	2004
38	KM4FO	1999
39	WT3K	1951
40	W0VX	1939
41	K3JT	1925
42	NE2V	1924
43	NA4J	1909

CMA

Rank	Call	CMA
1	AA3B	15210
2	K3WW	11620
3	N5RZ	10769
4	KR2Q	10697
5	N5ZO	10538
6	DL6KVA	10410
7	NA8V	9841
8	W1RM	9534
9	F6HKA	9240
10	VE3KI	8327
11	AD5A	8288
12	K3WJV	8270
13	OM2VL	8269
14	K7QA	8055
15	KG9X	8047
16	KC7V	7951
17	N7US	7774
18	W9ILY	7563
19	WT9U	7285
20	K1VUT	7104
21	W0VX	7021
22	KY4GS	6938
23	N4DW	6895
24	K3JT	6826
25	K9WX	6735
26	N5TJ	6734
27	K6NR	6363
28	K1DJ	6239
29	WT3K	6222
30	N1DC	6200
31	SM6CUK	6173
32	W4WF	6103
33	N2UU	6059
34	K4IU	6029
35	WN7S	5995
36	9A1AA	5731
37	AA5JF	5639
38	KO4VW	5605
39	W8FN	5582
40	EA1X	5577
41	VE3TM	5532
41	G4BUE	5532
42	AC6ZM	5485

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ACA

42	DM6EE	928
43	N1DC	923
44	KW1X	919
45	N5KD	907
46	W0UO	896
47	KW7Q	887
48	WS7L	876
49	W1RM	871
50	N9FZ	870
51	N3CKI	859
52	DF7TV	854
53	K3ZA	850
54	KR3E	849
55	N5XE	844
56	EA6EJ	843
57	K5OHY	835
58	AA5JF	830
58	WM4Q	830
59	AC6ZM	828
60	KV8Q	827
61	W5AL	825
62	N4DW	818
63	W0VX	815
64	VE9KK	813
65	K0WA	805
66	WU6P	798
67	W4WF	786
68	VE3KI	777
69	SM6CUK	773
70	N2EIM	763
71	W9CF	757
72	AF5J	746
73	K4TZ	745
74	KC4WQ	744
75	KY0Q	728
75	N2UU	728
76	KB8GAE	712
77	N9UNX	708
78	DL5XL	705
79	M0RYB	690
80	VE3INE	682
81	9A1AA	676
81	HA5BMS	676
82	K4IU	664
83	WA9LEY	648
84	OZ3SM	647
85	VE3MV	645
86	K4GM	644
87	NE5A	641

ACMA

44	W0UO	1902
44	EA6EJ	1902
45	N5KD	1881
46	KW1X	1849
47	SM6CUK	1828
48	F5SGI	1815
49	N4DW	1761
50	N1DC	1754
51	K1SM	1744
52	N3CKI	1714
53	VK2GR	1703
54	W5AL	1688
55	K3QP	1682
56	W1RM	1665
57	W4WF	1628
58	WU6P	1617
59	VE3KI	1612
60	AF5J	1585
61	W9CF	1584
62	N2UU	1578
63	AA5JF	1559
64	DF7TV	1547
65	WM4Q	1542
65	M0RYB	1542
66	KT5V	1526
67	DL5XL	1522
68	K3ZA	1514
69	AC6ZM	1501
70	KY0Q	1492
71	KV8Q	1469
72	VE9KK	1461
73	K5OHY	1443
74	N9FZ	1440
75	OZ3SM	1404
76	K4IU	1384
77	VE3MV	1376
78	KR3E	1368
79	W0TG	1361
80	G4PVM	1347
81	KC4WQ	1324
82	K4GM	1317
83	K4TZ	1312
84	WA9LEY	1310
85	HA5BMS	1288
86	N9UNX	1250
87	LY2MM	1248
88	WB5N	1239
89	WS1L	1226
90	N5ER	1220

CMA

43	W0UO	5482
44	NJ3K	5404
45	K1SM	5380
46	N5XE	5204
47	AA2IL	5200
48	NA4J	5170
49	GW0ETF	5126
50	WA9LEY	5001
51	F6JOE	4923
52	K1AJ	4867
53	WA4JUK	4861
54	WS7L	4858
55	K3QP	4815
56	K4GM	4777
57	OK1RR	4757
58	DM6EE	4731
59	KT5V	4729
60	VK2GR	4641
61	WN4AFP	4593
62	EA6BF	4588
63	DF7TV	4576
64	VE3MV	4553
65	KC4WQ	4494
66	OZ3SM	4488
67	DJ5CW	4406
67	I2WIJ	4406
68	KM4FO	4400
69	W6AYC	4325
70	K0WA	4313
71	N5KD	4312
72	W4CMG	4259
73	F5SGI	4253
74	KY0Q	4249
75	WS1L	4115
76	W0TG	4111
77	G4PVM	4091
78	K0TC	4054
79	AF5J	4051
80	NE5A	4002
81	KW7Q	3991
82	KV8Q	3990
83	N1EN	3985
84	WU6P	3976
85	W3WHK	3955
86	M0RYB	3922
87	KK0U	3906
88	W2CDO	3850
89	NE2V	3842
89	ND9M	3842

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ACA

88	VE3KIU	640
89	KK0U	626
90	AF4T	625
91	G3NKC	619
92	G4PVM	616
92	W8XAL	616
93	WB5N	613
94	K0TC	610
94	KE4CR	610
95	ND9M	608
96	K3WJV	605
97	N5ER	602
98	WA4JUK	596
99	AD7N	590
99	K1TR	590
100	W0TG	589

ACMA

91	G3NKC	1207
92	AF4T	1191
93	K0WA	1187
94	VE3INE	1186
95	KB8GAE	1170
96	VE3KIU	1164
97	DJ5CW	1139
98	G3LDI	1125
99	KK0U	1100
100	ND9M	1098
100	SM0HEV	1098

CMA

90	EA6EJ	3797
91	AF4T	3739
92	SM0HEV	3696
93	KR3E	3671
94	N3CKI	3662
95	K4TZ	3643
96	KC3M	3633
97	HB9ARF	3604
98	K3ZA	3524
99	SP1D	3382
100	4X6GP	3345

XXT Schedule

SPEED	XST	DAY	TIME (UTC)	EXCHANGE	SPONSOR LINK
20 - 25	MST	Monday	1300 - 1400z	Name + QSO serial number	International CW Coun-
20 - 25	MST	Monday	1900 - 2000z	Name + QSO serial number	International CW Coun-
20 - 25	MST	Tuesday	0300 - 0400z	Name + QSO serial number	International CW Coun-
QRS	AWT	Wednesday	1145 - 1200z	RST + Name	A1Club
20+ wpm	AWT	Wednesday	1200 - 1300z	RST + Name	A1Club
25+ wpm	CWT	Wednesday	1300 - 1400z	Name + CWops # (or S/P/C)	CWops
25+ wpm	CWT	Wednesday	1900 - 2000z	Name + CWops # (or S/P/C)	CWops
25+ wpm	CWT	Thursday	0300 - 0400z	Name + CWops # (or S/P/C)	CWops
25+ wpm	CWT	Thursday	0700 - 0800z	Name + CWops # (or S/P/C)	CWops
< 20 wpm	SST	Friday	2000 - 2100z	Name + S/P/C	K1USN
< 20 wpm	SST	Monday	0000 - 0100z	Name + S/P/C	K1USN



QTX: Enjoying the Art of Conversational CW

[Dan Romanchik](#), KB6NU

This month, we have a guest columnist: Amanda, KY4GS. As you can see from the tables below, Amanda is an avid rag chewer, and I have personally enjoyed many QSOs with her....Dan.

I have received multiple emails concerning the CWops QTX Award program. I am thrilled that there is interest in the QTX program, and thank you for the emails. Here are answers to some of the most frequently-asked questions.

To participate in the QTX award program, you have to keep track of the QSO length. This means using a logger that keeps track of the start and end time of each QSO or recording the length of the QSO length in the comments section of your logger. For example, one fellow I know uses N1MM as his only logger and later edits the ADI file manually before uploading. If you are just starting out and do not have many QSOs that qualify, you can also just make a separate list on paper or a computer.

The [CWops Award Tracker](#) (thanks Fabian!) will keep track of your yearly totals, but it does not break it down by the month -- that is your responsibility. You can, however, use the numbers generated in that program if you make a note of the numbers.

I personally have a filter in my logger that makes reporting very easy. You can do this in many loggers. For many months, I compared my numbers to make sure my filter matches the numbers from the Award Tracker. Anyway, it's a matter of remembering to do it on time!

The deadline for submitting the QTX reports is the 3rd of each month. That is a pretty narrow window, when I have other responsibilities that I have to do at the end/beginning of months. I STRONGLY suggest setting a monthly alarm or reminder to make sure that you get your report in on time.

You will find the [rules for the QTX Awards](https://cwops.org/qtx-awards/) (https://cwops.org/qtx-awards/) on the CWops website. The form for submitting your monthly report is also on this web page.

- A QTX QSO is a QSO that is 20 minutes or longer. Repeat ragchews with the same station on the same band are permitted, and QSOs do not have to be with members of CWops.
- A "mini-QTX" QSO (or mQTX, for short) is a QSO with anyone that lasts from 10 to 19 minutes. As with the QTX QSO, repeat ragchews with the same station on the same band are permitted, and QSOs do not have to be with members of CWops. NOTE: A single QSO counts only once and should be reported as either a mQTX or QTX but not both.
- Ragchews do not have to be with other CWops members. In order to qualify for an award, however, you must be a member at the end of the year when the awards are presented.

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General operating considerations

I am often asked if I use a clock or timer to keep an eye on the length of a QSO. The answer is, no, I do not. Many of my "normal" (non-contest) QSOs do not make the 10 minute mark. They might end after 8 minutes, but I am not concerned with how long a QSO lasts or whether it is a QTX or QTX-mini. Concern yourself with having a nice chat with someone.

Do not stretch out QSOs unnecessarily to "force" a QTX or mini-QTX. If the conversation is just not happening at the time, let it go, especially if the other person is giving indications that they need to go. If band conditions take a tumble, finish your conversation another time with better conditions.

30 meters, 17 meters, and 12 meters are a great place for ragchews, especially on contest weekends. If you don't get on these bands, you are missing out...

I do not schedule contacts, but "skeds" are a great way for new members to start out with the QTX program. People have asked me for skeds, but they don't work well for me, since I like to come and go from the radio unpredictably. Outside of contest participation, my time on the radio is hard to predict, so I don't want to set a time to be somewhere (since I have enough of that already). I have a flexible schedule and get on the radio for breaks. While on the radio, I might be doing laundry, working on a project, making lunch/dinner, etc. So yes, I often have a timer going for stuff like laundry or the oven, which dictates when I need to get off the radio (and the QTX stuff doesn't matter when there is something in the oven or my husband's dress shirts are getting wrinkled in the laundry).

I do not do many roundtable QSOs. I very rarely participate in CW nets (even though I might listen to them while doing something else). Again, I personally like to come and go as I please on my own time.

Don't concern yourself with the number. Remember that you are not competing with anyone except yourself. Like in the CWTs, I compare my score with my previous scores. Scores in contests allow you to evaluate your performance and looking at the scores of others in your geographic area may help you determine if it might be band conditions. The weekly CWTs are also a way to see if small changes to your station can improve performance. With QTX, you might have a busy month while someone else had extra time to get on the radio -- and there is no comparison. So look only at your own performance.

The more you get on the air and have ragchews, the more people will answer you. Eventually, you will start getting answered by the same people, so you will develop a conversational aspect to the QSOs.

Even if you are not calling "CQ", sometimes someone will call you after a QSO with someone else. It is courteous to say "up 1" or "down 2" when you were not the original CQer on that QRG, since you don't want to steal someone's frequency unless they say it's okay. Then go up one and ask QRL? before proceeding on the new frequency. If you lose the caller, then send out a CQ or call him to give him a chance to find you again.

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For newcomers to ragchewing, be aware of possible side effects:

- Your fist improves.
- Your head copy improves.
- You meet new friends.
- You have more than a "standard" QSO (with RST, QTH, Name, station info).
- You no longer think about each character you send.
- You re-learn the importance of spacing between words (because you have a QSO with someone who runs their words together).
- And many more beneficial side effects.

Finally, please find me on the air. We can have a standard exchange, talk about our favorite key or rig, discuss the weather, or whatever develops in the conversation. It does not have to count for the QTX program. And, if you hear me calling "CQ" at a different speed than you like, I will try to adjust my keyer and/or spacing to where I believe you will be comfortable to copy my signal.

73, Amanda KY4GS (CWops #3208)



AAØYY: Had a great QSO with KC5THR John, Found out that we had so many things in common, including our time in the Navy and woodworking. It was one of those Qs where you feel like you really made a connection.

ABØWW: Cooler weather and shorter days mean more time on the radio.

AJ1DM: Another month of fun conversations with my friends. Thanks for all the ragchews!

DG5CW: I earned my last 2 qualifying entry tickets for the HSC this month :-). My longest November QSO was with DJ6PC, lasting for 49 minutes.

GWØETF: I had a nice K2<>K2 QRP QSO with IW6CFI on 30m.

KF9VV: Interesting month of ragchewing. One of the standout QSOs was with an operator that uses Ham Alert to receive notification when one of the CWops QTX ops is calling CQ. The other standout was working an op with a rhombic antenna. That one really surprised me.

KR2Q: November was a busy work month. Not much time for QTX. December is, I hope, much better with 2 weeks off from work.

KW4NJA: This was my first month trying to really focus on upping my ragchew game. I had my longest QTX of the month with John N3BTM, who was really patient with my mistakes. Mike W1PL/M and I had a short 15-minute mQTX while he was driving down I-95 outside Boston.

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That alone tells you what a great op he is. Thanks also to Bob N9HAL, Jim KF9VV, and Tim AI5BE for a great month for my ragchew journey.

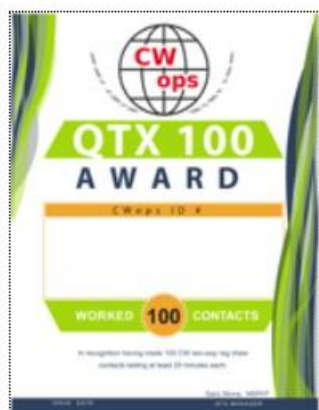
NØBM: Always a pleasure reporting good ragchews here. Thanks for encouraging longer QSOs and giving us this platform. Happy Holidays. Mixed in with CWTs and SSTs, a good month for longer QSOs. 2 of my minis were 19 minutes. HI HI. Worked a PA station with a K5 vanity, because he said "it flows better". You've got to love that!

N9EEE: Three QSOs during the big AU event earlier this month. The eerie watery sounds took some extra focus, but were mesmerizing.

N9FZ: Some good chats this month. Happy Holidays everyone!

W8OV: One interesting QSO was with a holder of a Novice license since the 1980s who sent excellent Farnsworth code- characters at 20 wpm; effective speed of 6 wpm. I sent him a QSL card and some info about CW Academy.

WA4IAR: Thanks for you taking your time to run the QTX program.



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QTX - November 2025

<u>Call</u>	<u>QTX</u>	<u>Call</u>	<u>QTX</u>	<u>Call</u>	<u>QTX</u>	<u>Call</u>	<u>QTX</u>	<u>Call</u>	<u>QTX</u>
WS1L	49	KB6NU	20	AB0WW	8	KR2Q	4	KW4NJA	2
WA4IAR	41	KF9VV	17	K6DGW	8	K8UDH	3	DL5XL	1
K9OZ	40	KY4GS	15	G4KKU	7	N9FZ	3	KM4JEG	1
KC0VKN	36	F5IJ	12	AJ1DM	6	DG5CW	3		
AA0YY	23	KG5IEE	11	N0BM	5	N0BM	5		
N8AI	21	DK9HE	10	W8OV	4	N9EE	2		

mQTX - November 2025

<u>Call</u>	<u>mQTX</u>	<u>Call</u>	<u>mQTX</u>	<u>Call</u>	<u>mQTX</u>	<u>Call</u>	<u>mQTX</u>	<u>Call</u>	<u>mQTX</u>
KY4GS	42	G4KKU	16	WA4IAR	11	KM4JEG	4	PE2V	2
WS1L	42	KR2Q	14	AJ1DM	10	N0BM	4	KM4JEG	1
KG5IEE	24	KB6NU	13	AB0WW	10	W8OV	3		
N8AI	18	GW0ETF	13	DL5XL	9	KW4NJA	3		
K6DGW	18	F5IJ	12	N9EE	9	DG5CW	3		
AA0YY	16	DK9HE	11	KF9VV	8	N9FZ	2		

QTX - Total 2025

<u>Call</u>	<u>QTX</u>	<u>Call</u>	<u>QTX</u>	<u>Call</u>	<u>QTX</u>	<u>Call</u>	<u>QTX</u>	<u>Call</u>	<u>QTX</u>
WS1L	490	DK9HE	205	N7HCN	46	GW0ETF	18	N3JT	6
WA4IAR	394	KR2Q	176	N9EE	37	AE4GS	15	VK3QB	5
N8AI	361	KG5IEE	162	N9FZ	34	K7VM	8	DF7TV	4
VE3WH	359	KF9VV	148	N5LB	28	KE4I	8	K1NW	4
N7HCN	338	F5IJ	138	AB0WW	28	M0SDB	8	SV2BBK	3
KC0VKN	284	M0MZB	136	N0BM	27	W6QX	8	W3WHK	3
KB6NU	277	N2DA	100	DG5CW	25	KD6GW	8	PG4I	2
KY4GS	276	AJ1DM	85	G4KKU	24	AI3A	7	KM4JEG	2
K9OZ	258	G0FOZ	84	DL5XL	21	K4LFL	7	KW4NJA	2
AA0YY	239	K8UDH	79	W8OV	21	PE2V	7		

mQTX - Total 2025

<u>Call</u>	<u>mQTX</u>	<u>Call</u>	<u>mQTX</u>	<u>Call</u>	<u>mQTX</u>	<u>Call</u>	<u>mQTX</u>	<u>Call</u>	<u>mQTX</u>
KY4GS	572	DK9HE	147	AB0WW	42	PG4I	23	W6QX	7
WS1L	364	KF9VV	126	DF7TV	40	AE4GS	20	K7VM	5
N8AI	256	GW0ETF	122	VK3QB	40	MM0UMH	20	KM4JEG	5
AA0YY	222	M0MZB	112	N9FZ	38	KD6GW	18	K1NW	4
KR2Q	205	F5IJ	85	N9EE	38	W8OV	15	GW0KRL	3
KG5IEE	199	G4KKU	66	N0BM	37	M0SDB	14	KW4NJA	3
KB6NU	171	DG5CW	63	K8UDH	34	KC0VKN	14	N5LB	2
VE3WH	167	DL5XL	63	PE2V	34	K4LFL	9	W3WHK	2
WA4IAR	158	AJ1DM	43	SV2BBK	26	N3JT	9		
G0FOZ	148	N7HCN	42	KB4DE	24	KE4I	7		



My Story: New Member Introductions

Compiled by [Tim Gennett, K9WX](#) (CWops #1462)

Andy Martin, AJ7CM CWops #3826

Hi! I'm happy to be here. I'm a recent joiner to ham radio (licensed in late 2024). My interest in radio started when we bought a few GMRS radios to keep in contact with each other while out mushroom hunting. As soon as I found out what HF could do, I was hooked. I started my CW learning journey with CWops in January of 2025 after getting my Extra and haven't stopped since.

I enjoy portable QRP and POTA. Part of the magic of CW for me is seeing where you can reach with 5 watts, a battery, and a wire. I like building antennas like my 20 m delta loop that's been great for DX and taming neighborhood noise. I also love fixing up and using old keys, most recently a 1943 Vibroplex Lightning Bug. I'm also interested in emergency communications and a member of my local ACS.

I'm the proud dad of 10 year old boy/girl twins. When I'm not on the radio I love cooking, hunting for mushrooms and wild huckleberries, and writing thriller novels.



Mishel Pavlovski, Z31PM #3811

I live in Macedonia's capital, the City of Skopje with my wife Olivera. My son also lives in the city, in an apartment two kilometers away.

My first license was a class "C" license, which I acquired in ex-Yugoslavia. The permit allowed me to operate a club radio station. I received my SWL callsign YU5RS110 some time later. By 1986 I was a member of the YU5FAR club which operated out of Skopje.

Like most, I have experienced ups and downs over the years with all the things that life throws at you. It is for that reason that I did not get back into the hobby until 2024. That is when I received my "A" class and my current callsign Z31PM.

I enrolled in a Fundamental level CWA class in November 2024. It was my great honor to become a member of CWops, #3811 in October 2025. Here, I wish to thank N3JT, Jim and AC6AC, Buzz, as well as the CWA co-advisors for their support in my CW journey.



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While CW is my favorite mode, I also enjoy working in SSB, as well as digital modes.

POTA and WWFF activations are my favorite. I also like hunting POTA and WWFF. Of course, you can find me chasing DX, contesting, etc.

I am dedicated to promoting CW in Z3. I have already recruited several hams from my county to attend various CWA levels.

I am grateful for the great friends I have made on the band and in CWops and CWA classes!

I want to give back to CWops/CWA. I volunteered for co-advisor. I make as much time for CWA as I can, provided my work life allows for it.

I work as a full-time professor in the St. Cyril and Methodius University located in Skopje.

Amy Haptonstall, AG7GP CWops #3843

In 2017, I obtained my license and was given the call AG7GP. This achievement opened doors I never would have considered years prior, and I was hooked after my first Field Day. Initially my husband Robin, N7HAP, and I got licensed to be able to communicate from our off-grid property, but I found a great fascination in HF. I took up contesting and portable operations either with my local club or doing my own solo expeditions for 7QP and CQP. I also enjoyed doing WWFF in our local national forests. This eventually led to SOTA, my main passion in radio since 2019.



After hauling 25# of gear up my first SOTA summit, and having major pileups at only 14 wpm, I decided I needed to work more on my CW and using QRP equipment. Six years and 600+ summit activations later, it is part of my weekly schedule. I get out and summit a couple mountains a week, almost exclusively CW at <10 watts. SOTA is more of a lifestyle than an activity and there is much more to it than radio. It incorporates many of my interests such as the hiking and exploring the outdoors, birding, wildlife and wildflowers, travel, photography, map navigation, CW and fellowship.

I enjoy the camaraderie of radio more than anything. I am active with two local clubs, Southern Oregon ARC and recently elected President of Rogue Valley ARC. I like to take part in organizing radio events such as SES, FD, WFD and other group contests. I also am the founder of the W7O/PNW SOTA Campout, and SOTA Queens of the Mountain event. Giving back with the event organizing and club participation are greatly outweighed by what the SOTA and local radio team has provided for me.

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I hope to improve my CW to get a little faster, especially on my copying, so I can do contests and a ragchew more smoothly. I think I'm in the right spot!

Jürgen Nimbler, DF6FQ CWops #3844

First of all, thank you very much to Josep, EA6BF, and Jim, N3JT, for sponsoring me.

I was born in 1958 and became interested in amateur radio in 1973 because I liked telegraphy. A new club of the German Amateur Radio Club (Großkrotzenburg F40) opened in my town, and I joined their first amateur radio course. In 1975, I received my call sign DF6FQ, and I have now been active for 50 years.

Amateur radio also guided my studies. I studied electrical engineering with a focus on communications technology and finished in early 1981.

After two years in the Army, I worked for 20 years in the telecommunications field. From 2002 to 2004, I studied again at the Technical University of Darmstadt and earned my doctorate (Dr. phil.). After that, I taught electrical engineering at a vocational school for another 20 years. I have been retired since 2023.

Some important steps in my amateur radio life:

In 1976, I built my first RTTY station and started working HF. In 1979, I built my first ATV station for 435 MHz. Many other home-built projects followed, including antennas and RF equipment. After starting a family and building a house, I had more time again from 1985 onward and built tube amplifiers (HF to GHz), antenna tuners, and antennas. In the 1990s, I was active in QRP. I also taught many amateur radio courses. My two sons also have HF licenses.

I am active from 160m to 3cm and live in northern Bavaria, about 20 km east of Frankfurt am Main (JO40MB). Today, I use a 100 m square-loop antenna and a hexbeam for HF, and directional antennas for 2 m and above. I am also active via the QO-100 satellite. Since 2013, I have been chairman of our amateur radio club (F40). I am now very active in CW and SSB, and most of my QSOs are in CW.

I am happy to become a member of CWops and look forward to many contacts around the world.



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Dave Bertz, KE8QFO CWops #3840

Let me first start by saying it is a great honor to be admitted to CWops. I would like to add a special thank you to Dale N5SGQ for your nomination. Also, thank you so much to Mike K4PI, Mark KB9S, Dwight KM4FO and Erik WS4K for your sponsorship.

I first became interested in ham radio during my sophomore year in high school. Our Electronics teacher, Mr. Ludlum (SK), was a ham and encouraged his students to pursue the hobby. We formed an amateur radio club at school and started to study for the Novice exam. I recall one weekend, the students in the club installed a tower on the roof of the school building, where it still stands. Imagine being allowed to do that today!



When it came time to take the Novice test, I failed the 5 wpm code portion. After that, other things like cars and girls became more important. Amateur radio was forgotten. I thought about it a few times over the years but work and family were a priority.

I retired from General Motors in 2017 after 43 & ½ years where I was a skilled tradesman for most of them. My wife, Gail and I have a home on 5 acres, just south of the western basin of Lake Erie. We have 4 kids between us and 9 grandchildren aging from 22 yrs to 19 months. I enjoy wine making (and drinking), shooting on my backyard shooting range and reloading.

Finally, in 2020, I decided why not study and get my ticket now? Plenty of time, Covid and all. So, I got my Technician in December of 2020, General in February of 2021 and Extra in October of 2021. Shortly thereafter I also became a VE at our local club. So, I finally made it Mr. Ludlum! But there was still that 5 wpm thing bugging me. Something left undone.

So, in the Fall of 2022 I enrolled in LICW to learn CW. I made my first CW QSO that November and have never looked back. To say it's an obsession is an understatement. In 2023 I took an ICR class with CW Innovations. While it helped, I was still not where I wanted to be. So, this past September I enrolled in CWA and took the Intermediate Class. Game changer. Great advisor and co-advisors! Thanks Buzz, Dale and Marcin! But perhaps most important, classmates who have become great friends. I January of 2026 I will be taking the Advanced class.

My shack's in the basement, a Yaesu FT 991a and an EFHW out back. I hope to put up some other antennas next spring. With 5 acres there are no limitations. I also have a G90 and QCX Mini for portable. Finally, a 3D printer is down there where I try to make any parts I may need.

Thanks again and hope to catch you all on the air!

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Bobby Freuler, KM4JEG CWops #3825

Hello from the Pirate State of North Carolina. Go Pirates!!! My earliest remembrance of amateur radio goes back to the early 1970s. I remember looking through magazines (I wish I could remember which ones) at the radio kits and was fascinated by them. I was, however, afraid of code. This kept me from pursuing my license, so I put it off. Sports and other interests eventually got in the way, so I put it on the backburner and forgot about it.

I joined the Air Force in 1980 as an Air Traffic Control Radar Repairman and my interest peaked again, but the code kept scaring me off. I had the fortune, once I retired in 2005, of getting a federal job in Raleigh NC. There I met Billy Newton. We started talking and he kept encouraging me to get my ticket. I finally took the plunge about 11 years ago.



First interests, of course, were Baofeng and HF SSB. I enjoyed it but started getting aggravated with SSB. I finally shook off my fear and decided to learn code.

I found CWops and CW Academy in 2022. I am glad I did. My first class was with Randal (KG5IEE) and Craig (N2DA), next was Charles (K5KXJ), then Ron (VE3FXX), Mark (VE3BXG) and finally Joe (KK5NA). The one trait every advisor had was how supportive they were but not afraid to hold me accountable. This is what I needed. Not once did they sugarcoat the amount of work that was going to be needed. They were and still are right. It also goes without saying that my classmates along the way were just as supportive. We were all in this together.

It was an honor to be nominated by Joe and sponsored by K4RUM, K4TZ, K1EBY and KO4VW. It is humbling to say the least. This is just the beginning. I have much to learn. There is no rest for the weary. I know I must work every day, to not only get better, but be the ambassador this club deserves.

I have a very modest setup consisting of a KX3/PX3 with XPA100 amp, several antennas and a paddle. Nothing fancy but it works. I enjoy hunting DX and contesting. I am also learning to love QTX.

My other interests are traveling in our camper van, saltwater fly fishing and following Atlanta Braves baseball and of course all things East Carolina University.

Finally, I would be remiss if I didn't thank my wife, of 40 years, Linda. She has encouraged me from the start to see this through. She gets just as excited as I do with all my contacts. Not to mention she puts up with me talking to my paddle when the hand and brain want to go in opposite directions.

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Thanks again everyone. I want to give back by being an advisor in the winter and I hope I inspire someone else out there that is ready to take the code plunge. See you on the air.

Stephen “Kent” Dickinson, KØWEW CWops #3845

Listening to shortwave radio stations was a neat thing to do in the mid-1950s, and as a kid my National NC-60 was my favorite toy. But wanting more, I took advantage of the help of friends and mentors to earn my Novice in 1959. I became a General Class operator at age 13, just as the voice band segments were transitioning from Amplitude Modulation to Single Sideband.

In 1968 the United States Air Force sharpened my CW and typing speed to prepare for three years of service as a Morse Systems Operator at Iraklion Air Station in Crete, Greece.



Those years of shift work and high-speed code left me burned out on radio, but after about five years back home I re-tested for General and took the callsign NØDJT. Once firmly back on the air I upgraded to Extra, and eventually I used the vanity system to buy back my original callsign (KØWEW). As a ham my preferred mode at that time was CW.

In 2004 I volunteered with Army MARS, and I stayed with the Military Auxiliary Radio System until 2021. I served MARS in many leadership positions, including Kansas State Director and then Region 7 Director. Although MARS involved primarily voice and digital operation, I ran a regular CW net for our Region 7 on Saturday mornings.

My CW skill is pretty good even now, but I am reluctant to do much contesting. I understand why contesting is exhilarating and satisfying for many hams, but for me a contest starts feeling like being back at work within about twenty minutes. A one-hour CWops event can be much more than enough contesting for me.

In my case the best thing about operating CW is that I find it comfortable and relaxing. Being a CW operator is a unique ability, and it has served me well all these years.

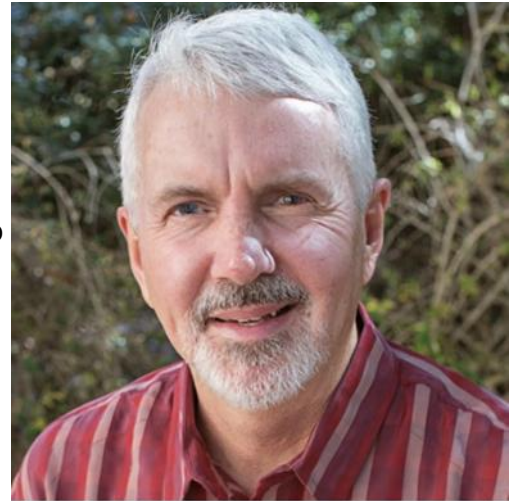
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Joe Bryan, K5BRY CWops #3846

First, special thanks to Jim (WBØRLJ) for nominating me, and to my sponsors David (N4IN), David (W8XAL), and Keith (K7MOA). I am truly honored to be invited to join this club.

I was first licensed in 1980. I bought a TenTec Century 21 and a dipole. I was able to make a few contacts and learn CW. After a year or so, I let my license expire. Fast forward to 2012, and my wife suggested I get involved in the hobby again. I obtained my Technician and General licenses relatively quickly, and I realized that what I really enjoyed was CW. It had been over 30 years since I had practiced CW, so I had to relearn it all. I made a self-imposed goal to become proficient at 20 wpm before taking the Extra exam. After some practice, I was finally able to pass the exam. That was over ten years ago.



Today, I am very interested in QRP and POTA. I suffer from a condition called “QRP equipment acquisition syndrome.”

Professionally, I am now retired, but I spent most of my career working as a software engineer here in Austin, Texas. I was also a visiting assistant professor of computer science at St. Edward's University.

Other hobbies include fly fishing (yes, we do fly fish here in Texas), furniture making, playing with grandkids, and working on our small rural property west of Austin in the Texas Hill Country.



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